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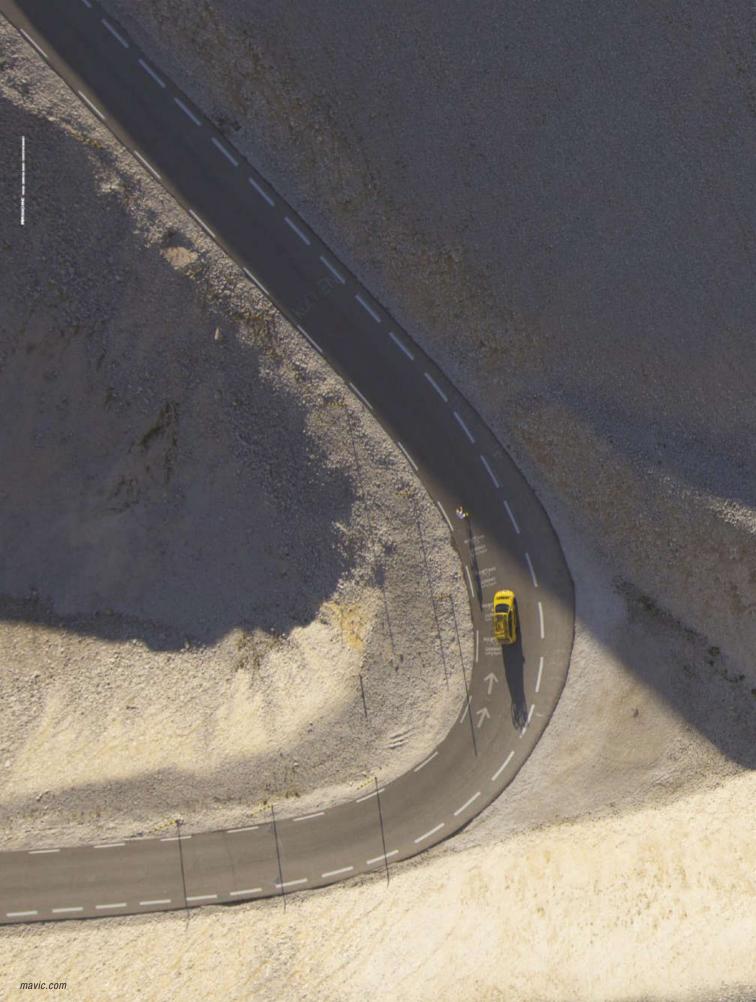


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# THIS ISSUE 17/09

# Doull success shows we're on track for Rio

wain Doull's ride at the Tour of Britain was not only the standout performance last week — it was a good sign for the British track team. Doull has been in British Cycling's development programme since he was a junior and is now in the toptier podium programme, and races for Team Wiggins on the road. His third-place finish suggests the British squad has turned a corner just one year from Rio.

At the 2014 Track World Championships in Colombia, Doull was one of several young track endurance riders who failed to perform. It had looked like he might struggle to make the step up to the senior ranks, having been a talented junior. But he has gone from strength to strength, and will now have WorldTour teams knocking on his door.

What will he decide to do for 2016? It looks like he's chosen to stay with the track set-up and UK-based Team Wiggins, to focus on the team pursuit for Rio and put off any WorldTour aspirations for another year. That's a brave move and one that's encouraging for the British track team, which has lost some of its hottest talent to the road scene, where there are more

opportunities, more money and more glamour.

Simon Richardson, Acting editor



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# Boasson Hagen at the double

# Norwegian rediscovers form to take second Tour of Britain title

Nick Bull in London

aving triumphed in the 2009 race, Edvald Boasson Hagen became the first rider to win the modern Tour of Britain twice last week after a brilliant all-round performance.

The MTN-Qhubeka rider (pictured in yellow) beat Sky's Wout Poels by 13 seconds thanks to the time bonuses he gained in stage finishes as well as a strong showing on the race's hilltop finish on Hartside Pass. The 22-year-old Welshman Owain Doull (Team Wiggins) placed third, his best road result to date.

This was the Norwegian's first stage race victory since May 2013, and one that came in spite of his former team Sky's strong line-up. "I think perhaps this year it was harder to win the GC than back in 2009; the course was tougher and Sky were very strong," he said.

The 28-year-old was exposed on Friday's stage through the Peak District, but despite being his team's sole representative in a front group that contained four of Sky's six riders, a well-timed attack saw him gain the time needed to all but secure the victory.

"Edvald proved he was the strongest out of the GC guys," said Sky DS Servais Knaven. "Hats off to him."

### Going underground

Perhaps reflective of how significant the race now is to the sport's big European

teams, no British rider won a stage of the race for the first time since 2010.

Sky's British contingent of Peter Kennaugh, Ian Stannard, Ben Swift and Andy Fenn worked for Poels and sprinter Elia Viviani throughout; that the pair won four stages means the team's week cannot simply be dismissed as a failure because of the GC result.

Mark Cavendish crashed out of the race on Friday's sixth stage after colliding with a car wing mirror, while rival André Greipel left the race in anger after a controversial finish on Sunday.

Officials relegated Greipel from first to last on the stage, ruling that he'd veered onto Viviani's line on Regent Street.

■ Tour of Britain review starts on p28.





# Bennett: "I feel let down"

Tour of Britain race director Mick Bennett says that the country's domestic UCI-registered teams squads may have to earn their place in future editions of the race after what organisers saw as a disappointing showing on stage six.

Team Wiggins's Owain Doull placed third overall, and One's Pete Williams won two competition jerseys in this year's race. However, the former was the only rider from the six domestic squads in the event to finish ahead of the *gruppetto* into Nottingham, which crossed the line nearly 46 minutes down on stage winner Matteo Trentin.

"It was a very difficult stage, and perhaps it was my fault that it was too difficult," said Bennett. "But I felt a bit let down with their [the domestic teams'] performance that day after everything we've done for them in the race.

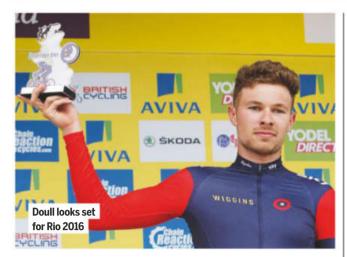
"I thought at least they could have gone through and off for the day, regardless of what happened up front.

"At the start of this year, we wondered if we should put all six British UCI Continental squads in the race by virtue of them being British, or be controversial and only pick some.

"What happened in Nottingham has changed the dynamic for me and my team now, I think."

Bennett also said he is powerless to stop riders from complaining about the length of transfers in this year's race. André Greipel, Peter Kennaugh and Alex Dowsett were among those to bemoan approximately 1,050km of travel between stages in this year's edition, barely 400km shorter than the total race distance. Making the point robustly, Greipel claimed the race "pushed everybody to their limits".

In response, in defence of the transfers, Bennett said: "The transfers are not intentional. We treat the riders with absolute respect: we put them in the best hotels, we give them the hard stages they wanted, we put them live on television, but if that's what they think, I can't change that."



# "Class act" Doull deserves a spot at Sky

# Welshman tipped for big things by team-mate Wiggins

Chris Marshall-Bell

Sir Bradley Wiggins believes that his national and trade team-mate Owain Doull is already good enough to be riding for Sky.

Welshman Doull showed his GC potential at last week's Tour of Britain, placing third overall after finishing no lower than 11th across the race's varied eight stages.

Wiggins was effusive in his praise for the 22-year-old, who is seeking to be part of the GB team pursuit squad at next year's Rio Olympics and has emerged as one of Britain's most promising road talents.

"He's a class act. You only have to look at him on the bike," Wiggins said. "It's a travesty that he's not at Sky already because he's that's good.

"I think Sky is where he really wants to go and I think that will probably be the best fit for him going forward."

Doull looked set to turn professional with Europear in the 2015 season until it appeared he could figure in Team Wiggins's plans last autumn.

"It was a bit of a no-brainer [to join Team Wiggins] with my ambitions to ride the team pursuit at Rio and to improve on the road. This team's the best of both worlds for that," Doull said.

"Rio is the big focus in the immediate future, but I'd like to switch onto the road after that and follow what people like G [Thomas] and Pete [Kennaugh] have done. They've showed it's doable — that's what I'd like to aim for."

Wiggins roomed with Doull at the start of last week's race and has seen first-hand the development that his young protégé has made.

"He's really on the ball — he was there on Google Street View looking at the last corners [on the stages]," added Wiggins. "I don't think Europear would have been a great move for him, having spent six years in France myself. I think there are bigger fish for him to fry.

"He probably would have got lost in that system there, whereas now he's got better results this year and there's potential for him to get Olympic gold next year."



# "There's a lot more climbing on most of the stages: previously, there were always a couple of days when you could cruise"

s good as it is when you get to race abroad, it's always great to race at home. This year's Tour of Britain was the first time I'd ridden the race since 2012, and even since then it's got a lot tougher.

There's a lot more climbing on most of the stages: previously, there were always a couple of days when you could cruise along pretty easily. Also, the racing is on all day here now, from start to finish. But that's good: it's what bike racing is all about.

After a hard eight-day race, it's not just the legs that are tired. You're sick of eating the same food as you try to fuel your body; because the stages are so long, you almost have to force yourself to eat sometimes, even when you don't feel like you need it.

Luckily on our team, we've got a few jokers to keep the mood light. My Danish team-mate Rasmus Guldhammer has been good with the jokes — you can tell that he was in good shape because he was taking the mick out of people and winding them up. Humour breaks up the long days and keeps you level-headed.

#### **Under the radar**

Before the race I predicted he would win it: he rode well in the Tour of Denmark and the Arctic Race of Norway, so we believed we had a chance. We put faith in him and he rode well all week to finish fourth. It's one of the good things about being in a Pro Conti team; I think people underestimated him in all the talk of all the big-name riders taking part in the race.

Because we were working for him, I wasn't trying specifically to get in breakaways, although I did end up in one on stage three to Floors Castle. It looked like being a good move — the peloton gave us a big advantage at one point, but I got caught out a bit on one of the climbs. Somebody dropped the wheel in front of me, and three riders went clear. Still, it was good to get a good workout!

Then there was the Stoke-on-Trent to Nottingham stage through the Peak District. Just because the grupetto came in all that way down didn't mean it was an easy day. Some points in stages you can have a bit of a laugh with other riders, but that one definitely wasn't one of them!

Russell Downing is a former British road race champion. During the off-season he enjoys bingeing on caramel slices and Guinness.

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Gregor Brown in Madrid

espite falling at the final hurdle, Giant-Alpecin's Tom Dumoulin blossomed into a Grand Tour contender at this year's Vuelta a España.

The 24-year-old Dutchman timetrialled and climbed his way into the red jersey in the final week but cracked under the pressure of Italian Fabio Aru and his gang of Astana team-mates on the penultimate stage. After the final sprint stage in Madrid, won by Dumoulin's team-mate John Degenkolb, Aru took

the final Grand Tour of the season by 1-17 over Joaquim Rodríguez (Katusha) and 1-29 over Rafal Majka (Tinkoff). Dumoulin finished sixth overall, slipping from a six-second lead to a 3-46 deficit.

Nevertheless, the Dutchman's resilience was the story of the race and drew comparisons to Bradley Wiggins in his road racing prime — a time triallist with enormous threshold power output and a high power-to-weight ratio. Wiggins was third in the 2011 Vuelta before going on to enjoy his annus mirabilis in 2012.

This year Dumoulin gained time in the opening week, limited his losses in the high mountains, before taking the race lead with his first Grand Tour stage win in the 38.7km time trial in Burgos, last Wednesday.

"[Wiggins] showed that if you can ride good TTs and do something about your weight, you will have a good power-toweight ratio," the Maastricht native said.

"It showed me that it's possible in the future to go for more in Grand Tours."

Dumoulin is 6ft 1in in height, weighs 70kg and, according to his team, pushed



6.0 watts per kilo for 25 minutes on the Ermita de Alba climb last Monday. He is aiming, after the World Championship time trial next Wednesday, for the 2016 Olympic TT, though Giant may also consider racing for the GC in the Tour.

"Tom can push high watts," his coach, Adriaan Helmantel said. "[He can do well in the Tour] if he can combine that and get a good parcours like Wiggins had in 2012, with not the hardest mountain stages and a lot of time trial kilometres."

Meanwhile, Aru's progression drew comparisons to another Grand Tour

winner: Vincenzo Nibali. After placing third in the Giro in 2014 and second this year behind Alberto Contador, the 25-year-old Sardinian, who is just four months older than Dumoulin, finally got his first Grand Tour win.

"This win is a turning point in Aru's career," said *La Gazzetta dello Sport*'s Pier Bergonzi, who has followed the careers of Nibali and Aru.

"Nibali won his first Grand Tour in the Vuelta before the Giro and Tour, and Aru is on the same path."

■ Vuelta race coverage starts p74.

# Vuelta delivers despite debacles

**Gregor Brown** 

Despite controversy, criticism and the withdrawal of four of the biggest names in cycling, this year's Vuelta a España proved to be one of the most exciting races of the season.

Even without Vincenzo Nibali (disqualified on stage two), Peter Sagan (injured after a collision with a motorbike on stage eight), Tejay van Garderen (out with a broken shoulder, also on stage eight) and Chris Froome (out with a broken foot on stage 11), the race showcased new names and gave fans a show that went down to the wire.

Race director Javier Guillén defended his race following criticism from Mark Cavendish, who declared that the race had "become stupid".

"I don't know why Cavendish called it stupid; maybe he was trying to promote the Tour of Britain. That was the wrong way of doing it," Guillén said. "This race is not over-the-top. We had a close race."

The rise of Dutchman Tom
Dumoulin and his close battle with
Fabio Aru provided a thrilling climax,
but the race also highlighted sparkling
new GC talents including Esteban
Chaves (Orica-GreenEdge), winner
of two stages and fifth overall, and
South African Louis Meintjes (MTNQhubeka), who finished 10th. The race
saw the first Grand Tour stage win for
Chaves's team-mate, Australian Caleb
Ewan, and Trek's Jasper Stuyven and
Danny Van Poppel.

Despite complaints of long transfers and high-profile crashes involving race motorbikes, the feeling was that the Vuelta should not be cut to two weeks as had been suggested as part of future reform of the cycling calendar.

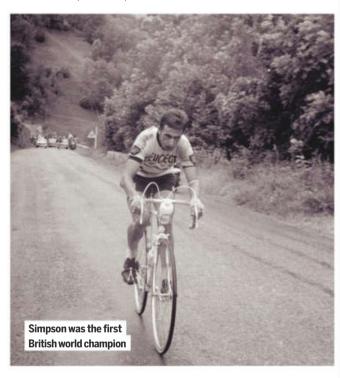
"The Vuelta deserves its place as a three-week race. The people are passionate and there's history," Steve Cummings (MTN) said. "I'd rather be here than in the Tour of Britain, and I'm British."

## **Celebrating Simpson's world title**

A free exhibition presented by British cycling clothing brand Rapha and *Cycling Weekly* began in Manchester today, celebrating half a century since one of Britain's greatest ever riders, Tom Simpson, took victory at the 1965 World Championships.

The exhibition, entitled '1965: Tom Simpson's Golden Year', features unseen photos and memorabilia from the life of Simpson and is at the city's Rapha Cycle Club until November 1. Simpson became the first British rider to win the World Championship road race; his feat in San Sebastian wasn't replicated until 2011 when Mark Cavendish won in Copenhagen.

A special launch night event will take place this evening (September 17) with a panel of guest speakers including Simpson's nephew Chris Sidwells, and his former team-mate Barry Hoban. Entry is free: more information at po.st/Simpson1965.



### **Funding hopes for Preston Park**

Hopes for the future of Brighton's Preston Park cycle track, the oldest in the UK, were raised last week when a report by the local council proposed funding repairs to the 579m circuit in order to meet safety standards. Brighton and Hove City Council proposes to invest £100,000 in the facility and hope to secure a further £185,000 from British Cycling. Racing at Preston Park, which was constructed in 1877, was banned in January after concerns were raised about the safety of its perimeter fencing. A Facebook campaign to restore the facility to full use has attracted over 5,500 supporters.

### Wiggle-Honda sign Garner

Double junior world champion Lucy Garner will move from Liv-Plantur to Wiggle-Honda next season, having signed a two-year deal with the British team. "For me, I just need the next step, a new challenge. It's that time now in my career when I need to make that step," Garner said.



# "Imagine sitting astride a motorbike, in the cold and wet, hanging on to 15 kilos of camera. It's not a task to be taken lightly"

ace motos have come in for a bit of a bashing of late. The peloton and its convoy of motorised vehicles has always had the potential for accidents. But with the rising popularity of our sport, and the appetite for close-up footage of all the action, then that potential is bound to rise. In reality, are there in fact any more rider/motor vehicle altercations than in years gone by? Or are these incidents, like everything else in life, just being captured more and more from bystanders on the roadside?

At the Tour of Britain the three camera motos along with the helicopter managed to bring us some great shots of the riders, as they battled their way around the eight stages of this year's race. One thing I know from experience that helped them with that task was the good weather.

It's one thing riding a pushbike in the cold and wet, but at least you're creating some heat while doing so.

With an engine, however, the only protection you have from the elements are the garments you wear. So imagine sitting astride a motorbike, in the cold and wet, hanging on to 15 kilograms of camera while keeping the riders in focus. It's not a task to be taken lightly.

These guys, like the riders, take their jobs very seriously and, as with those racing, when it comes to the highlights being shown later in the evening they are there, glued to the TV looking out for their shots filmed during the day's stage. Pride is the word I would use to describe the emotion they feel when it all goes well.

Fortunately, I haven't yet had to witness the opposite end of the spectrum. If and when an incident does happen between a cyclist and a camera moto then I dread to think of how those emotions would change for all the people involved in bringing bike racing to our screens.

Long may we safely see some of the world's best riders racing on our roads. But if there is ever an incident, I'm sure there will be a member of the public ready and waiting to get THE shot of the race. No doubt by accident, standing with their back to the action while taking a selfie.

Former double world track champion, Rob Hayles is a pundit for TV and radio. He's also a coffee connoisseur and garden shed inventor



### **Monday September 7**

Responding to claims of motorised bikes at the Vuelta a España, Movistar insisted a broken bike was hidden during stage nine only to keep sponsors happy. Fan footage showed the bike being off-loaded by team staff mid-stage.

### **Tuesday September 8**

Tom Boonen penned a new deal, till the end of 2016, at Etixx-Quick Step. On the same day, Colombian Esteban Chaves, who won two stages in this year's Vuelta, committed to another three seasons at Orica-GreenEdge.

### **Wednesday September 9**

Derby cyclist Chris Clay told the *Derby Telegraph* that he would sue the local council after a pothole caused him to crash. Clay claims he'd reported the hole to Derbyshire County Council but no action was taken. The council confirmed the possible legal claim.

### **Thursday September 10**

Lotto-Soudal's Kris Boeckmans was taken out of a medically induced coma following a crash on stage eight of the Vuelta on August 30. The Belgian, 28, suffered severe facial injuries. He will be kept in intensive care in Spain until he can be flown back to Belgium, said the team.

### **Friday September 11**

Reports emerged in the Dutch press that young rider Danny van Poppel would join Team Sky in 2016. The 22-year-old son of former racer Jean-Paul won stage 12 of this year's Vuelta a España and currently rides for Trek.

### **Saturday September 12**

American Molly Shaffer Van Houweling set a new women's Hour record at altitude at Aguascalientes, Mexico. The 42-year-old's 46.274km broke Leontien Zijlaard-van Moorsel's 12-year-old record by 209m.

### **Sunday September 13**

The premiere of *The Program*, the latest Lance Armstrong film, took place at the Toronto International Film Festival. Lead Ben Foster told the *Guardian* that he doped as research. Out in the UK on October 16.



### Twice runner-up nails National TT Circuit Champs

**Snowdon Sports** 

fter placing second in this year's National 10 and 50, Matt Clinton finally secured another national title, clocking fastest in the National Time Trial Circuit Championships in Bedfordshire on Sunday.

The fast 30-year-old Mike Vaughan Cycles rider won the 2008 National Hill-Climb Championship, and has been chasing another national title ever since.

He covered the 20-mile course near Cranfield in 41.30, holding off Josh Williams (Revolutions Racing) by 44 seconds while Brett Harwood (Terry Wright Cycles) was third.

"It's nice to win a second championship—it has been a few years since I won the hill-climb title," said Clinton. "It was a rolling course, which suited me—a bit draggy. I'm looking forward to the Hill-Climb Championships!"

The event incorporated the final round of the RTTC Classic Series. Overall winner Matt Bottrill (drag2zero.com) was riding his final time trial before focusing on triathlon next season, but he punctured and didn't finish.

The women's title went to defending champion Sarah Storey (Pearl Izumi-Sports Tours International) with 46.47 which gave her the win by 1-30 from team-mate Claire Rose, while Helen McKay (Les Filles RT) was third.

"It's always good to defend a title," said Storey. "But I needed a result to secure the Classic Series title too. It was great from a team perspective [too]. It was a fun way to end the season and keep my form ticking over as I plan for the Rio Paralympics. The race went really well."

Matt Langworthy (Mid-Devon CC) and Louise Scupham (Scarborough Paragon) were crowned junior male and female title winners respectively.



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# To do this week...



### Sheffrec Tour of Strines, Sunday, September 20

Tracing sections of the second stage of last year's Tour de France, the route features 8,700ft of climbing and takes riders up notorious local climbs with gradients approaching 25 per cent. Organisers say it is: "possibly the hardest 50 miles you will ever ride." £20 on the day. HQ: Bradfield Village Hall, S6 6LB, 8.30am. tinyurl.com/pkj8arb



### Tickets for The Cycle Show, NEC Birmingham, September 24-27

More than 280 companies including all the big bike brands will have stalls at the event to showcase their latest products and their 2016 models. Regularly attracting thousands since its original event in 2002, the show also includes cyclo-cross racing and the UK's biggest dirt jumping contest. Adults £13 and concessions £11 in advance.

www.cycleshow.co.uk



### Upton CC End of Season RR, Sunday, September 20, Pontefract

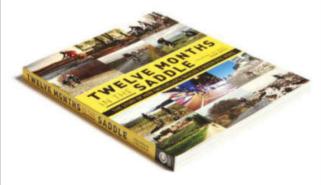
Billed as a warm-up to the afternoon's Tickhill GP in nearby Doncaster, the 86km race for category 2/3/4 riders takes in nine laps of a 9.6km circuit. "The climbs are manageable in the big ring but the laps are wearing and get harder each lap," warns organiser Andy Tune. £25 entry on the day. po.st/UptonRace.



# Twelve Months in the Saddle by John Deering and Phil Ashley

From the cobbled Classics to Mont Ventoux and the Fred Whitton Challenge, this book is a collection of 12 rides across 12 months. But really it's the story of two blokes (MAMILs, by their own admission) having fun on their bikes, whose tales and photography capture the romance of the open road and make you want to ride off on an adventure of your own.

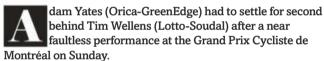
www.carltonbooks.co.uk; £16.99





# Brit settles for runner-up spot after breakaway duel with Wellens

Hugh Gladstone in Montréal



The 23-year-old Bury native had his breakaway partner leading out the final uphill sprint in the Canadian city. But despite successfully getting a jump on the Belgian as the line approached, Wellens proved to have the better legs after a fast, hard and soaking wet race.

The pair had escaped the bunch after Yates attacked on the 2km climb of Mont Royal on the last of 17 laps of a 12km circuit, but had chasers breathing down their necks to the end.

"Tim came across to me and gave me a big turn straight away," said Yates. "All the run-in towards the finish, he was doing the most work and doing the biggest turns. It wasn't just at the finish he was stronger but from the top of the climb all the way to the finish. I can be pretty happy with second."

Yates's second place follows another runner-up position in the general classification of the Tour of Alberta a week earlier and August's win in the Clásica San Sebastián. Sitting out of the Worlds, he now has three weeks of training before one more single-day hit out in Il Lombardia (October 4).

"If it's raced a certain way and I try something like I did at San Sebastián, that could be good," he said. Wellens has similar ambitions for the Italian race.

Yates's Orica-GreenEdge team added one other second place to their collection from September's campaign in Canada, when Australian Michael Matthews finished behind Etixx-Quick Step's Rigoberto Uran in the Grand Prix Cycliste de Québec on Friday. The Colombian jumped away in the final throes of the race and put in a powerful effort on the uphill finishing straight to hold off the salivating bunch behind.



# Chris Dredge, 21

CT 2020, Bruges, Belgium

Where are you? Bruges. It's quite a nice place to live. I came on holiday here a few years ago so knew what it was like. It's very windy and we have to train that bit harder because there are no hills [nearby]. How's the racing? My racing was full-on in August, racing blocks of six days a week. The kermesses are similar to those in the UK but two-and-a-half times the length. The inter-club races are more controlled but still fast. The break goes and slowly gets pulled in; that's how the trend goes.

How's the form? I had glandular fever from March to the end of June, during which time I was completing my mechanical engineering degree at university. I came back from a low fitness base, so I'm relatively happy with how I've raced.

What have you learnt? I've learnt to be patient, not to worry or stress. When I was first ill, I couldn't train or race and I knew something wasn't right but it took six weeks to be diagnosed. It's about making the best of the situation you find yourself in.

How's life? I chill out with team-mate Adam Lewis on the evenings and watch movies. We're normally so tired from training that we just want to sleep.

**What's next?** Hopefully there's enough time left in the season to get a win, but

time left in the season to get a win, but it's hard because they all seem to come down to bunch sprints and I can't outsprint 80kg Belgians.

Afterwards, I have an internship with an engineering company for six to eight weeks in the UK and then I'm hoping to tie up a ride on a team on the Continent for



# Simmonds and Dowsett ready for Worlds TT test

# Duo are GB's only entrants for individual TTs in Richmond

ayley Simmonds's exceptional year in British time trialling has seen her rewarded with selection for Great Britain at the World Championships time trial in Richmond, USA, next Tuesday, September 22.

The Velosport rider won the National Championships and RTTC titles over 10 and 25 miles this season, and cemented her burgeoning reputation with a thirdplace finish at the Chrono Champenois 33.4km time trial in France last Sunday.

Despite being Britain's first female entrant in the Worlds time trial since 2012, the 27-year-old will go to the USA feeling under no pressure.

"I'd like to do what I did in the British Nationals: focus on my own performance and ride to the best of my ability," Simmonds, who is also riding the road race, told Cycling Weekly.

One rider feeling more pressure is Alex Dowsett; Great Britain's position in the UCI's national rankings will guarantee one Olympic spot for the men's time trial at Rio 2016, but that will double if Dowsett — the only Briton competing in the men's discipline on Wednesday [September 23] — places in the top 10 at the Worlds.

"I've done it before, I don't see why I can't do it again," he said, referring to the 2012 Worlds in which he finished eighth. "The Worlds are always a bit nerve-wracking; gone are the days when I just go to ride round for experience."

Dowsett placed 20th in last year's Worlds, having struggled to recover from his Tour of Britain exertions. "I'll spend as much of the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday after the race on the sofa as is possible this year," he joked.

The 26-year-old did not expect to feature in the Worlds individual event but injury to Chris Froome and Geraint Thomas's withdrawal meant he received the call-up.

next year.





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# END OF SEASON CLEARANCE!

































# Pettinger's plan

## New tactics for the 2013 hill-climb champ

Chris Marshall-Bell

ejvan Pettinger has climbed the equivalent of 85 ascents of Mont Ventoux this year as he builds up to his attempt to reclaim the national hill-climb title at Jackson Bridge, West Yorkshire, on October 25.

The Oxfordshire-based hill-climb specialist's climbing total of 140,000m of ascent in 2015 — almost all of it on rides in the UK — exceeds the 80,000m he had climbed by mid-September two years ago when he won the national stripes for the first time in his career on the Stang.

However Pettinger, 38, believes that his craving to ride competitively on anything with an upward trajectory cost him last year, when he finished fourth in the

Nationals on Pea Royd Lane behind Dan Evans. "I see racing as good recovery. I'm racing every weekend in the build-up [to the Nationals] but not twice a weekend as often, because last year I found out that racing too much can interfere with training," he told *Cycling Weekly*.

"Recovery is best with proper rest and proper rest is how you get a lot better.

"But it does seem a shame to train on your own when you can race, especially when I think that hill-climbing is the best thing about cycling."

Pettinger's team Sri Chinmoy bears the name of the spiritual leader he follows, and he also likes to meditate before his races. However, he admits to being uncertain whether his climbing statistics may help him regain his crown.

"I've done an awful lot more climbing



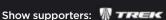
this year through adding more hills to my training rides, but whether that makes me faster is a different matter," he said.

Pettinger picks Evans as the favourite for the Nationals in five weeks' time, after the 2014 champion ended Pettinger's five-year dominance of the Buxton CC promoted event on Long Hill on September 6.

"When I started in 2004 there were nine riders at a CTT Open event; now there's 80," he added. "This year there are five or six guys who could be on the podium at Jackson Bridge."











# THE BIG QUESTION

# What tips would you give someone to encourage them to cycle to work?

Keep some dry gear at work just in case you can't dry your wet stuff before you ride home.

Bradley Ashworth

Prepare everything the night before: kit, shoes, bike, lunch, whatever you need. You'll be less likely to talk yourself out of it if you can just get up and go!

Stewart Mead

Make sure you secure your bike, otherwise your commute has just got very expensive.

Neil McAlister

I'd suggest a slow progressive build-up. Week one: ride to work Tuesday; leave bike at work; ride home Wednesday. Week two: ride to work Monday; ride home Tuesday; ride to and from work Thursday. Week three: ride to and from work Monday; ride to work Tuesday and home Wednesday; ride to and from work Thursday. Repeat weeks two and three alternately for a month or so before increasing to a daily commute, or as many days as the commuter is comfortable with.

Colin Smith

Step 1: Find out if there are showers at work. 2: Consider using Google Maps to look at alternate routes. 3: Drive a variation of different bike routes to and from work a few times to get an idea of dangerous spots and/or possible alternative street paths. 4: Pack what you'll need for the day in a backpack or pannier. 5: Ask wife or husband to drop and pick up kids the days you ride. As a trade-off, cook a good dinner those nights. 6: Enjoy your ride.

Mike Daney

Don't fear traffic, always hold your position on the road and only give way when it is safe for YOU to do so.

Daniel Levey



Cycling gives you a sense of achievement, which leads to a feeling of confidence. When you ride to work, the day's challenges are taken on with strength and a level of emotional security only instilled after cycling. Ride to be strong and confident.

Toussaint McCrae

Want more money? Then cycle to work. I save a lot of money that would have been spent on petrol for the car or Tube and bus fare. I live in London Zone 5 south

and travel to Zone 2 north — that's £200 a month savings. However, I spend more now on bike gear and upgrades but don't tell anyone that.

Roy Padojino

### Next week's big question...

What did you think of the 2015 Vuelta a España?

Reply to us at cycling@timeinc.com or at www.facebook.com/CyclingWeekly

# Letters

Letter of the week wins a Lazer 02 helmet worth £69.99



### Veterans deserve more praise

STAR

Why is it that, despite incredible performances, veteran riders get little or no mention or respect for

their achievements?

The recent performance by veteran Richard Bideau, setting a new 100mile time trial record, must surely be considered as the most outstanding time trial rides by a British rider ever. To knock off four minutes from the existing best is mind-blowing and to do it in your firstever 100-mile race makes it more special. How many of our highly paid professional riders would be capable of recording those times - my guess is none.

We veterans are taken for granted; we organise most of the events, act as officials and introduce riders into the sport, but we get hardly any credit for it. The UK has one of, if not the, strongest veteran class in the world,

Give the veteran class some respect for all that they do.

Mick Ives, email

### **Get behind Geraint**

G for SPOTY! Without taking away from the massive achievements of Chris Froome (the only Brit to win the Tour de France twice among many other things), Geraint Thomas has to get my vote for BBC Sports Personality of the Year. If you watched the ITV Tour highlights this year, you would have seen what I mean.

His interview with Ned Boulting, the rest day press conference and his jokes at the



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finish line (after wrapping himself around a telegraph pole) were great TV.

Coupled with his performance and outstanding devotion to Chris, surely there's no argument? Maybe then he can appeal for a replacement pair of white Jawbones in his winning speech!

Paul Milner, email

### My first sportive

On August 29 my pal and I rode our first ever sportive, the Skye Mor - 95 miles around the northern part of the island of Skye. The Scottish summer didn't let us down, providing us with rain and wind to accompany a route profile that could best be described as spiky.

As locals, we knew what we were letting ourselves in for in terms of the route, if not in terms of what taking part in an organised sportive entailed. However, having committed to raising money for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research, we couldn't back down.

We were mildly intimidated by a girl preparing next to us who informed us that the last time she'd been on her

bike was when she'd won the Celtman Ironman triathlon. We quickly realised that the essence of sportives is that you're competing firstly against the route, then against yourself, and if you're going for overall victory, that's up to you!

In short, two 60-something blokes in Lycra did what we set out to do and decided to ignore our finish times. We raised nearly £1,500 for our charity. Thanks to all who supported.

Bill Mitchell, email

# WHY ARE YOU STARTING HALF OVERSLEPT FOR AN "I OVERSLEPT.

Johnny Helms was Cycling Weekly's resident cartoonist from February 1946 until November 2009.

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# **Consistent Boasson Hagen takes Tour of Britain**

Norwegian victorious after eight days of fine racing



# **EXPERTS' VIEW**

## **Charly Wegelius, Cannondale-Garmin DS**



Repeating success in any race is hard. Defending champion and Cannondale-Garmin rider Dylan van Baarle came out of the hilltop finish in the same position as he did last year. However, week-long races tend to be less specialist; a number of riders can be competitive.

The presence or lack of a time trial can affect things, and frankly at this time of year most teams send healthy riders to events, and not necessarily those best equipped to control the race.

It wasn't surprising that Sky and Etixx won seven stages of the race between them. I think the days when big riders and teams didn't take the smaller races seriously now have gone. This is a big race now. That predictably has an impact on the British domestic riders. The deeper you go into the race, the more the differences between the WorldTour and domestic riders show, especially now the stages are much longer.

### **Malcolm Elliott, former pro**



It was only the day before the race went up Hartside Pass that it dawned on me where it was. I've only ever come down it once before, in a car, and I remember thinking it would be perfect for a bike race. The lower slopes, in particular, have the feel of a European climb.

The GC had a good sorting-out there; there must be more climbs like that in Britain which could be included in future years.

I wasn't especially surprised that the race split up in the Peak District on stage six, although we had seen that a big front group finished most of the stages together despite how hard they had been. I think the difference with that stage was that it came later in the race, so people were more tired, and the winds also contributed to how difficult it was.

Everything happened there on Gun Hill within the first 20 kilometres, and you can understand why those who didn't make the split got dispirited pretty quickly and just rode into the finish in the *gruppetto*. The standard of the WorldTour riders now is such that most of them can handle themselves on terrain like that.

Nick Bull in London

ylan van Baarle proved it in 2014, Edvald Boasson Hagen reiterated it this year: consistent performances as opposed to stage-winning rides have become the key to winning the Tour of Britain.

The Norwegian never finished higher than second in a stage, but top-three finishes in the race's key stages were what allowed him to wear the yellow jersey on Sunday.

Compare that to 2009, when he won four of the race's eight stages en route to the overall title, and Bradley Wiggins's 2013 triumph that came off the back of a dominant time trial performance.

That's not to say that the normally equable MTN-Qhubeka rider rode conservatively in the event. "I would have felt better if I'd crossed the line first," he said atop a windswept Hartside last Thursday.

Sky's Wout Poels beat him to the line that day, and was just one second behind Boasson Hagen on GC afterwards. However, the Dutchman ideally needed a margin of 20 seconds on his rival to have any chance of overall success. Time bonuses on offer at each stage finish always meant Boasson Hagen was the favourite for the GC victory once he had taken yellow. In the 24 Tour of Britain stages he has ridden, he has placed in the top three (the positions in which bonuses are awarded) on 14 of them. Ultimately, he gained 20 seconds in this manner during the race, six of which came after he moved up to the top spot.

MTN appeared to have two GC options in the race: Boasson Hagen and Belgian Serge Pauwels were both well-placed after four of the eight stages. The latter fell out of contention on Hartside, while Sky's backup option, Peter Kennaugh, played a domestique role throughout, in his first race since abandoning this year's Tour de France. His British champion's jersey certainly received plenty of TV airtime.

Boasson Hagen was used to playing that role during his four years with the British team. Moving to MTN appears to have revitalised him. "I had my chances with Sky but perhaps I get more with MTN-Qhubeka," he said.

### **Tour of Britain in brief**

Mark Cavendish should be fit for the World Championship road race later this month, despite crashing out of the Tour of Britain. Cav injured his shoulder after clipping a parked car's wing mirror early on in Friday's sixth stage, and was taken to a clinic in Manchester for x-rays. Etixx-Quick Step confirmed no fractures or dislocations, but said he will "have to respect some days of rest".

Stage six between Stoke-on-Trent and Nottingham is one that many riders will never forget. "For me and for probably for 99.9 per cent of the guys it's the hardest race we've ever done," stage victor Matteo Trentin said. The incessant pace and demanding Peak District terrain led LottoNL-Jumbo's Steven Kruijswijk to say: "I'd compare it to a Tour [de France] mountain stage with four or five big climbs in it"

Six-man teams at the Tour of Britain are normally credited with the race's unpredictably, but there's another reason why the riders are fond of having fewer team-mates. Lotto-Soudal's Sean De Bie told *Cycling Weekly*: "It's nice having smaller teams because we always have three soigneurs [at races], so it's always quite fast to get a massage."

The Tour of Britain peloton swept up a boatload of Strava KoMs during its eightday tour of the country, but some amateurs managed to hold on to their virtual crown. Liam Beaty only achieved the fastest segment on the Note o' the Gate climb in the Scottish Borders in late August, but his time up the 4.3km climb was six seconds faster than any of the professionals. Dan Evans, reigning national hill-climb champion, kept his Pen-y-Pass and Tafarn-y-fedw KoMs in North Wales.

It was a case of two contrasting breakaway attempts for Alex Dowsett at this year's Tour of Britain. He admitted his decision to bridge across a four-minute gap to One's Pete Williams on stage two was not his "most astute decision", particularly since this exertion meant he dropped back to the peloton after around 25km. However, he said he was "proud" after making the break in Saturday's East Anglian leg — one that looked like staying clear for a period of time. "Today I attacked with my head and not my legs, which I've never done before." he said.

## **Roger Hammond, Madison DS**

房

There are a few people I came across in my racing career who I thought had something special: Cav was one, and Edvald Boasson

Hagen was another. He was pretty impressive; he really has a lot of power, he's incredibly strong.

Unfortunately, he ended up being a jack of all trades and a master of none. And when you go to Sky, they have a master of everything, so he ended up riding for Cav in sprints and Brad Wiggins on the climbs. How do you express yourself in that team? In the smaller races, they still had a Geraint Thomas or a Richie Porte as a leader. In that position, your mindset changes. Eventually you'll get a few years down the line and you realise you've just been riding from A to B, and that you've shut down the emotions

and feelings that come with being an aggressive rider.

He's woken up in good time, and he's learning how to be a winner again. He's ideally suited to most week-long races; even if there had been a long time trial here, he would have still been competitive. Look at it the other way round: where would Edvald lose races like this, if he arrived at the start of them in such form?

# Stage 1 Sunday September 6

Beaumaris > Wrexham 177.7km

# Cavendish outfoxed by wily Viviani

## As Manxman marks Greipel, Sky man steams ahead

Nick Bull

ky's Elia Viviani won the opening stage of the Tour of Britain from a bunch sprint for the second time in three years, despite the best attempts of the breakaway to stay clear.

### If Viviani won, where was **Mark Cavendish?**

Reversing what happened in all but one sprint in the Tour de France, the Manxman beat Lotto-Soudal's André Greipel in a winding, uphill sprint. However, by drifting to his right while focusing on the German, Cavendish left the door open for Viviani who took the shorter line on Cavendish's left to win.

#### How close was the finish?

Extremely: judges had to consult the photo-finish, although Viviani's confident victory salute suggested a more definitive win. It was a just reward for Sky's work to keep the breakaway in check for the majority of the stage, which took in all six regions of North Wales, although Etixx-Quick Step chipped in too.

### And what of the day's escapees? How did they get on?

They weren't far off staying away. The four-man move,

which included three riders from Britain's domestic teams (JLT-Condor's Kristian House, Madison-Genesis's Tom Stewart and One's Pete Williams) amassed a near eight-minute lead after breaking clear before the race reached Snowdonia, and were only caught with 1.4 kilometres remaining.

### Did anything happen to the GC contenders?

Some — including defending champion Dylan Van Baarle (Cannondale-Garmin) and Sky's Peter Kennaugh gained eight seconds on their rivals after the peloton split in the finishing sprint.



Viviani (r) pips **Cavendish in Wrexham** 

# RESULTS

#### 1. Elia Viviani (Ita) Sky in 4-26-29

2. Mark Cavendish (GBr) Etixx-Quick Step 3. André Greipel (Ger) Lotto-Soudal 4. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins 5. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar 6. Pim Ligthart (Ned) Lotto-Soudal 7. Mark Renshaw (Aus) Etixx-Ouick Step 8. Tyler Farrar (USA) MTN-Ohubeka 9. Alberto Bettiol (Ita) Cannondale-Garmin

10. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor all at same time

- General classification after stage one 1. Elia Viviani (Ita) Sky in 4-26-19
- 2. Mark Cavendish (GBr) Etixx-Quick Step at 0-04 3. André Greipel (Ger) Lotto-Soudal at 0-06 4. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-10 5. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar 6. Pim Ligthart (Ned) Lotto-Soudal 7. Mark Renshaw (Aus) Etixx-Quick Step 8. Tyler Farrar (USA) MTN-Qhubeka 9. Alberto Bettiol (Ita) Cannondale-Garmin

10. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor all at same time

# Familiarity breeds success for the British teams

Nick Bull

What's the best way for Britain's domestic teams to prepare for the Tour of Britain? Ahead of the 2015 race, most of them opted to ride parts of the route in training, with stages one, two, five and six the most popular to reconnoitre.

"We haven't got the same programme as the big teams, so we need to put in big days in training,"

said JLT-Condor's Kristian House, part of stage one's lengthy breakaway. "So you might as well do the big training days on the roads you're going to race on."

Madison-Genesis went beyond the recon rides: their preparation also included a 10-day training camp in the Pyrenees. They too placed a rider in the escape group: Yorkshireman Tom Stewart. "Last year we

went away, and it worked. If it isn't broken, don't fix it." said team manager Roger Hammond.

"But riding stages in training is very important anticipation is the most important thing in this race, and as we're not head and shoulders above everybody else, we need all the help we can get."

One Pro Cycling were represented in the break by Pete Williams, winner of



the race's sprints jersey in 2012. However, their preparation was mainly online than on the bike. "We've tried to piece things together," said team DS Matt Winston. "I've driven five stages completely and had the Garmin running, and we've looked at Strava and Google Street View.

"Guys will have ridden roads in previous Tours of Britain and they'll know some of the other roads too. I feel that as long as you've got the knowledge and data of what's going to happen, you can

prepare well — you won't always have the luxury of riding every race you do beforehand."

Yet for all this, even the best preparation can have its limitations. "I woke up ahead of one stage knowing how hard it was going to be having ridden it in training," said One's sprinter Chris Opie of his preparations for the 2012 race. "I was so put off I ended up pulling out."

House added: "You ride so many stages in training that you forget them. The second climb today — I didn't remember it!"



JLT-Condor

Reaction |



Start: Beaumaris

# Stage 2 Clitheroe > Colne 159.3km Monday September 7

# Vakoc triumphs from the break

### Promising young Czech wins from the front

Nick Bull

tixx-Quick Step won a stage of the Tour of Britain for the third year running, as Petr Vakoc made light of a challenging, largely clockwise course around the Ribble Valley and Pendle districts.

### How did Vakoc win?

Solo, and after a break of nearly 20 kilometres. The Czech rider, who is a dead ringer for his countryman and team-mate Zdenek Stybar, was earlier Etixx's sole representative in a group of eight who broke clear shortly after the day's

second categorised climb of Bleara Moor, a climb that was a regular in the race's previous incarnations but absent from the national tour since 1991.

#### Tell me more...

The eight leaders, who also included Sky's renowned climber Wout Poels, formed around 48 kilometres from Colne. However, a sizeable chase group behind meant their lead never went over a minute: with 20 kilometres to go they had just a 20-second advantage. Vakoc attacked with Cannondale's Alberto Bettiol shortly afterwards, before going clear solo.

### What happened to race leader Elia Viviani?

Combative riding at the front of the peloton on Bleara Moor proved his downfall: dropped on the climb, he formed part of a 49-man grupetto that sat up and finished 21-53 down.

### Anything else to note?

One's Pete Williams made the day's breakaway again: he was mainly solo, although Alex Dowsett bridged a four-minute gap to him, stayed up front for 25 kilometres before dropping back to the peloton again. And Bradley Wiggins and André Greipel were among seven riders fined for "urinating in public".



## **RESULTS**

#### 1. Petr Vakoc (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step in 4-02-22

- 2. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar at 0-07 3. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka at 0-09 4. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy 5. Matteo Trentin (Ita) Etixx-Quick Step 6. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins 7. Jens Debusschere (Bel) Lotto-Soudal 8. Dylan Teuns (Bel) BMC 9. Gorka Izaguirre (Esp) Movistar
- General classification after stage two 1. Petr Vakoc (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step in 8-28-41

10. Javier Mejías (Esp) Novo Nordisk all at same time

- 2. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar at 0-11 3. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka at 0-15 4. Floris Gerts (Ned) BMC at 0-17
- 5. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky at 0-18 6. Dylan Van Baarle (Ned) Cannondale-Garmin at
- 7. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-19 8. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor 9. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy both at
- 10. Serge Pauwels (Bel) MTN-Qhubeka at 0-25

## Czech's mate

#### Nick Bull

He's the same nationality as Zdenek Stybar. He rides for the same team as Zdenek Stybar. Even his riding style is reminiscent of Zdenek Stybar's.

However, Petr Vakoc showed he's very much his own man by winning the second stage of the race with an impressive show of strength.

The closing kilometres of the stage — most notably, the largely straight, four per cent

uphill finish on Colne's packed Albert Road — plus an organised chase behind greatly suggested that the 23-year-old Czech rider's advantage of 25 seconds with 10km remaining would not be enough.

"We feared that the last kilometre would be difficult for him — if you're cramping, you can lose 10 or 15 seconds quickly," said Etixx DS Brian Holm. "I discussed it with the mechanic and team doctor in the car; we didn't know if he could win."

Not that his victory was by any means a fluke. Advised by team management not to work for Mark Cavendish in the second half of stage one, Vakoc used his head and rode sensibly into Wrexham.

#### **Educating Petr**

Then again, the neo-pro is well-known within the team for his intelligence. He studied part-time for an economics degree for three years (this also allowed him to enter and win last year's University



World Championships road race and time trial), but he had to put it on hold in January because of his racing career.

He said of his education: "I'm wondering if I will continue or not because I don't really have time for it. It would be a pity to throw away the years I spent on it."

Vakoc has also learned to speak French by rooming with promising classics star Julian Alaphilippe throughout the past few seasons.

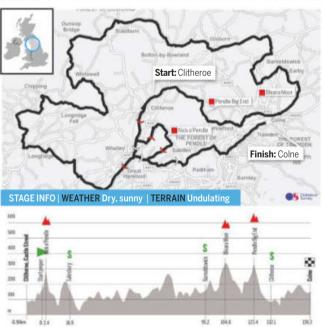
The pair progressed through Etixx's under-23

development team and on to their WorldTour squad; both signed four-year professional contracts at the start of 2014, suggesting complete faith in their potential as riders. This was Vakoc's third pro win.

"We know he's strong – normally his job is working for [Michal] Kwiatkowski or [Rigoberto] Uran, but he's an excellent climber, too," added Holm.

"He's very quiet, very consummated, and he's a good kid with good manners. He's trained with Cav a lot, and I know Cav is impressed with him."





# Stage 3 Cockermouth > Floors Castle 216km Tuesday September 8

# Double Scotch for Viviani

### Second place Lobato claims yellow jersey

Nick Bull

lia Viviani took his third-ever Tour of Britain stage victory; this one, as per his first in 2013, came in the shadow of a Scottish castle after another frantic chasing down of the day's breakaway.

### Was this as close a finish as stage one?

No. The Italian was the clear winner this time, having capitalised on Lotto-Soudal's dreadful lead-out for Jens Debusschere. Viviani picked the right wheel, and timed his sprint brilliantly in the grounds of the 18th century

estate, Scotland's largest inhabited castle.

#### Who was behind him?

Movistar's Juan José Lobato took second once again, but moved into the vellow jersey after race leader Petr Vakoc crashed 3.4 kilometres from the line. The Czech rider injured a finger, but luckily avoided falling into the stone walls that sat in close proximity to the road on which he crashed. He did not start the following stage.

### What happened earlier on in the stage?

A six-man group formed as

the race headed along the Solway Firth - sadly, low clouds limited the view - that notably contained NFTO's Jonny McEvoy. The Merseysider started the day just 1-20 down on GC, so the peloton never allowed the break too great an advantage.

### The peloton predictably caught the break with ease?

Not guite. Three of them — Madison-Genesis's Matt Cronshaw, MTN's Tyler Farrar and One's Marcin Bialoblocki ploughed on as a trio - and were only caught with 3.2km remaining.



## RESULTS

#### 1. Elia Viviani (Ita) Sky in 5-08-18

2. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar 3. Matteo Trentin (Ita) Etixx-Quick Step 4. Sondre Holst Enger (Nor) IAM 5. Jens Debusschere (Bel) Lotto-Soudal 6. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins 7. Alberto Bettiol (Ita) Cannondale-Garmin 8. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor 9. Alex Peters (GBr) Great Britain 10. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky all at same time

#### General classification after stage three 1. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar in 13-37-04

2. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka at 0-10 3. Floris Gerts (Ned) BMC at 0-12 4. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky at 0-13 5. Dylan van Baarle (Ned) Cannondale-Garmin at same time

6. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-14 7. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor 8. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy both at same time

9. Matteo Trentin (Ita) Etixx-Quick Step at 0-18 10. Serge Pauwels (MTN-Qhubeka) at 0-22

# Traffic control

Nick Bull

Commissaire Colin Clews's voice burst out over Radio Tour. "Guest car driver: please hesitate before passing my car, please."

The vehicle in question was trying to overtake stage three's six-man move on a fairly wide twolane road: it was doable, but doing so without permission in the race bubble remains a no-no.

Given the scrutiny of convoy vehicles this year, particularly since

the motorbike-related incidents in the Vuelta. Clews's comments are understandable.

Thankfully, watching the convoy on stage three from the Madison-Genesis team car, everything looked very calm, even though the race flitted between wide and narrow roads throughout.

Passing the peloton to get up to the team's rider in the break, Matt Cronshaw, took less than two minutes, helped by blasts on the car's horn.

Of course, permission

had to be granted for this, too. Clews, the race's other commissaires (one of whom is on a motorcycle) and moto-based race regulator Tom Morton can all oversee the flow of traffic during a stage. In the UCI hierarchy, the latter is arguably the most important when it comes to convoy management.

"It's really safe in this race, as safe as we can make it given that we're riding in a rolling road closure," said Morton, a former traffic patrol police



ON THE PODIUM

Juan José Lobato

officer and regional coordinator for the National Escort Group.

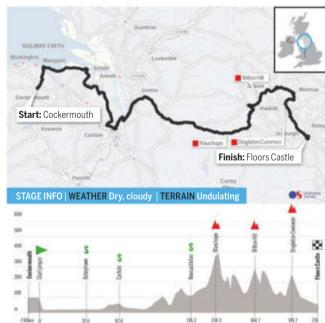
"The riders are being particularly helpful this year, they're moving over to give us free passage, but it's everybody's responsibility to look after those around them."

The general rule is that a maximum of three motorbikes are allowed to pass the peloton at once. Sometimes, mainly at the end of stages when non-essential vehicles leave the race bubble for safety reasons, more may be permitted to overtake.

"It's very fluid," added Morton. "I operate using a dynamic risk assessment — I can't script what will happen out there, but I have a rough idea.

"We've a high number of motos on the event, but only 15 of the 75 on the race are safety bikes. They're the ones who who warn riders of traffic islands, roundabouts and so on, so they pass the peloton several times throughout the stage.

"It's about pilots using common sense, keeping their distance and not taking risks."



# Stage 4 Edinburgh > Blyth 217.4k Wednesday September 9

Edinburgh > Blyth 217.4km

# Gaviria snatches career-best win

## Etixx-Quick Step apprentice sprints past André Greipel to victory in finishing straight

Nick Bull

olombian Fernando Gaviria's fledgling career continued in the former shipbuilding town, as he took his biggest win to date at the end of a largely routine stage.

#### Fernando who?

He's the rider who beat Mark Cavendish twice at the Tour de San Luis in January. Now team-mates with the Manxman having joined **Etixx-Quick Step in August** as a stagiaire, prior to a fulltime contract in 2016, Gaviria came from four bike lengths

back on André Greipel to comfortably beat the German.

### And Cavendish's take on this?

Sorry, conspiracy theorists: he crossed the line in 13th, arms in the air in celebration. Etixx entered the stage with two potential sprint options: Gaviria was best placed heading onto the 500m-long Waterloo Road finishing straight and took the initiative.

### So Gaviria's the real deal?

On this showing, yes. The sprinting winds of change may have started blowing, although they could be from the turbines spotted along the day's route, something Gaviria claimed to have never seen before.

### How did the stage unfold?

Rather sedately. Six riders made it into the break - one that admittedly took a while to form — but the presence of Etixx's Matteo Trentin and BMC's Danilo Wyss (both well-placed on GC) weakened its chances from the start. The peloton was helped too by the early arrival of the toughest of the day's three climbs - Redstone Rigg before the race passed back into England.



## RESULTS

#### 1. Fernando Gaviria (Col) Etixx-Quick Step in 5-13-08

- 2. André Greipel (Ger) Lotto-Soudal
- 3. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka
- 4. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins
- 5. Jens Debusschere (Bel) Lotto-Soudal
- 6. Jonas Van Genechten (Bel) IAM 7. Elia Viviani (Ita) Sky
- 8. Gerald Ciolek (Ger) MTN-Qhubeka
- 9. Floris Gerts (Ned) BMC
- 10. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor all at same time

#### General classification after stage four 1. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar in 18-50-12

- 2. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka at 0-06
- 3. Floris Gerts (Ned) BMC at 0-12
- 4. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky at 0-13
- 5. Dylan Van Baarle (Ned) Cannondale-Garmin
- at same time 6. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-14
- 7. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor
- 8. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy 9. Matteo Trentin (Ita) Etixx-Quick Step all at same time
- 10. Serge Pauwels (MTN-Qhubeka) at 0-20

# Beguiling views, hard racing and rough roads

### Chris Marshall-Bell

The moors, the castles. the quintessential British villages and the urban high streets all make up the Tour of Britain. Each stage is different in its peculiarity as the peloton criss-crosses numerous counties and three countries. But one thing remains, regardless of location: the Tour of Britain is unique, as race

debutants observed.

"Today's stage was nice, and yesterday was really enjoyable, too: the scenery on stage three was spectacular," said Cult Energy's experienced German pro Fabian Wegmann. "We've had some good views on the bus transfers — places I've never heard of before but are very pretty."

This was the only stage of the 2015 tour to start in Scotland, a country that BMC's Taylor Phinney is "sort of obsessed about".

He added: "I would love to hang out for a while [in Scotland] but I can always come back. It's taken me a while to get here but the Tour of Britain has brought me here."

Zdenek Stybar is seeking to emulate Etixx-**Quick Step team-mate** Michal Kwiatkowski's feat of 2014 by riding



this race and then winning the Road World Championships at the end of the month.

He even rode an extra 70km on top of this lengthy stage back to the Holiday Inn in Gosforth Park. "It's perfect for my preparation," he said. "Big, long stages and every day is really hard."

However, others pointed to the difficulties posed by the British road conditions in comparison to Europe. "The tarmac is not so smooth," IAM Cycling's Stef Clement said. "Maybe that's to

do with some weather conditions or you guys have a different way of surfacing the roads."

Wegmann agreed: "Even if the peloton is going slowly, you still have to press hard on the pedals," he said.

Unfortunately, parts of stage four — labelled by many riders as the flattest of the race so far — were raced at such speed that admiring the views wasn't so easy. "You don't get so much time to look around when the peloton is riding fast like we did today," joked Wegmann.





# Stage 5

Prudhoe > Hartside Fell 166.4km

Thursday September 10

# Poels supreme on summit for Sky

# **Dutchman sprints past Boasson Hagen to the line**

Chris Marshall-Bell

out Poels made it three wins from five stages for Sky with victory atop Hartside Fell in the North Pennines, but the man he beat — MTN-Qhubeka's Edvald Boasson Hagen — took the yellow jersey by one second.

Another Sky win — is this race too easy for them?

Definitely not — they're not leading the GC, after all. Dutchman Poels was a deserving winner, though: he unsuccessfully attacked 2.3km before the summit, and after Boasson Hagen broke clear approaching the flamme rouge, Poels made light of a headwind in the final 600m to surge past the Norwegian in sight of the line.

# How did Boasson Hagen find himself in yellow?

The race's time bonuses. The MTN-Qhubeka rider picked up six seconds on the line here, in addition to four in Colne and Blyth. He inherited the jersey from Juan José Lobato, who was dropped at the foot of the climb.

Aren't summit finishes for climbers, not riders like Boasson Hagen?

Supposedly, but this result

shows two things: one, that the Norwegian still has the all-round qualities that his youthful promise suggested in the past, and two, that Hartside's average gradient of five per cent without any serious variation was more of a strongman's climb. Zdenek Stybar placed fourth, after all. The peloton split more than many predicted, too.

# Did the day's breakaway ever stand a chance?

No, mainly because Tinkoff's Michael Mørkøv, who started the day 18 seconds behind Lobato, was in it with four others. One's Pete Williams got himself in there again, too.



# RESULTS

1. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky in 4-12-22

2. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka at 0-02 3. Beñat Intxausti (Esp) Movistar at 0-17 4. Zdenek Stybar (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step at 0-18 5. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy 6. Steven Kruijswijk (Ned) LottoNL-Jumbo 7. Xandro Meurisse (Bel) An Post-Chain Reaction 8. Chris Anker Sørensen (Den) Tinkoff-Saxo 9. Rubén Fernández (Esp) Movistar

# General classification after stage five 1. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka in 23-02-36 2. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky at 0-01

10. Dylan Teuns (Bel) BMC all at same time

3. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy at 0-30 4. Beñat Intxausti (Esp) Movistar at 0-33 5. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-37 6. Dylan Teuns (Bel) BMC at 0-38 7. Zdenek Stybar (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step 8. Rubén Fernández (Esp) Movistar 9. Steven Kruijswijk (Ned) LottoNL-Jumbo 10. Chris Anker Sørensen (Den) Tinkoff-Saxo all at

# Mountainside etiquette, British style

Nick Bull

Stand on the roadside of a mountain in the Tour de France and you'll see beer cans, caravans and questionable tans aplenty. The scene on Hartside Pass couldn't have provided a greater contrast.

Transportation is the biggest difference when it comes to comparing the scene of a British race climb and those on the

continent. Thousands of bikes leaning on barriers, or lying on grass verges emphasises that — there's not a spectator car in view.

Aside from a dozen or so people in normal clothes (one of whom was wearing a home-made T-shirt that read "bring back David Duffield" on it), everybody else around me is in cycling kit. The strong wind means it's mainly of the winter variety.

Alcohol is out of the question: plastic, not glass, bottles were being drunk out of, and those at the summit buying tea and coffee contributed to what was most likely the Hartside Cafe's most profitable day ever.

The exposed nature of the road means I can see the preceding kilometre in the distance, although the task of identifying riders is even harder given the

same time



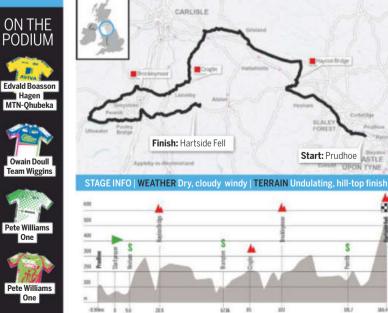
sun's rays are beaming off the road.

Everybody looks to be in black kit, a forerunner for how the peloton will probably look in 2020. I see Edvald Boasson Hagen attack Wout Poels — both of whom do actually wear black kit — as the GC battle hots up. Polite applause ensues; nobody attempts running alongside the pros, or filming them using selfie sticks, as you see in other big races.

Further down the order, NFTO's lan Bibby and JLT-Condor's Richard Handley rode as a duo, talking to each other, as if they were on a club run.

One's Chris Opie got a big cheer; one fan had earlier chalked his name on the road (there's no painting on roads here), while Raleigh-GAC's Evan Oliphant raised a laugh joking to the official marshalling the vehicle deviation about riding up it for a short cut.

It did not matter that no home rider placed in the top 10 of the stage: after all, there was a distinctly British feel to the day's proceedings.



# Stage 6 Stoke-on-Trent > Nottingham 192.7km Friday September 11

# Trentin triumphs on "hardest day"

# Peloton struggles on tricky terrain in crosswinds

Chris Marshall-Bell

atteo Trentin won stage six into Nottingham after an action-packed trip through the Peaks, while Edvald Boasson Hagen increased his lead over Wout Poels.

### Did the race's queen stage deliver action, then?

Yes. Some riders — including Trentin — described it as one of the hardest day's racing they'd ever done.

#### So what happened?

Everything. Crosswinds, undulating terrain and a dozen riders desperate to

dislodge Boasson Hagen from the yellow jersey created the most unpredictable of stages. The stage split into pieces on race favourite Gun Hill. tackled within the first 20km, before the race leader showed his strength by claiming three bonus seconds to Poels's one at the first sprint in Buxton.

#### Did anybody look like taking the yellow jersey?

Defending champion Dylan van Baarle, Zdenek Stybar, and Steven Kruijswijk — all GC threats — were in one dangerous move that was eventually neutralised, before Movistar's Ion Izagirre, another contender, launched

an unsuccessful solo attack with 30km remaining. Other GC hopefuls Stefan Küng (BMC) and Lotto's Jens Debusschere tried, until Trentin - no GC threat rode away nine kilometres from the finish.

#### And what of Sky?

Having placed four men on the right side of the stage's big split, Sky tirelessly drove an unrelenting pace up front in an attempt to dislodge an isolated Boasson Hagen from the race lead. But they never looked like cracking the Norwegian, who rode across to Trentin late on, ending Poels's GC chances.



# RESULTS

# 1. Matteo Trentin (Ita) Etixx-Quick Step in

- 2. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka at
- 3. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-04 4. Zdenek Stybar (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step
- 5. Jens Debusschere (Bel) Lotto-Soudal
- 6. Alberto Bettiol (Ita) Cannondale-Garmin 7. Alex Peters (GBr) Great Britain
- 8. Dylan Teuns (Bel) BMC
- 9. Xandro Meurisse (Bel) An Post-Chain Reaction
- 10. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky all at same time

# General classification after stage six 1. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka

- 2. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky at 0-13 3. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy at 0-43 4. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-44 5. Dylan Teuns (Bel) BMC at 0-51 6. Zdenek Stybar (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step
- 7. Rubén Fernández (Esp) Movistar 8. Steven Kruijswijk (Ned) LottoNL-Jumbo 9. Xandro Meurisse (Bel) An Post-Chain Reaction
- 10. Chris Anker Sørensen (Den) Tinkoff-Saxo all at

# Raleigh-GAC in the wars on local roads

### Nick Bull

Mention Nottingham to any bike aficionado, and there's a good chance the name 'Raleigh' will come up in the following conversation. With its origins tracing back to a start-up in the city in 1885, bikes such as the Chopper and its Tour de Francewinning TI-Raleigh squad helped cement its place in cycling history.

These days, the Raleigh-GAC team is based out of nearby Derby, but it's clear that the brand identity is still strong in these parts. "We've had incredible support going into this stage; there's been an overload on social media," said team owner Cherie Pridham before the start in a chilly Stoke-on-Trent.

"It's the most important stage for us, so we know what we need to do. We

want to look for the break: the riders base themselves at Birchover, so they know what's coming."

#### Local heroes

Scotsman Evan Oliphant was the team's main protagonist in attempting to fulfil their breakaway ambitions.

The stage's frantic start, plus the presence of the uncategorised Gun Hill in the opening 20km put paid



to that. "I was trying to get away, but then we turned on to the climb and I was regretting those efforts," he joked.

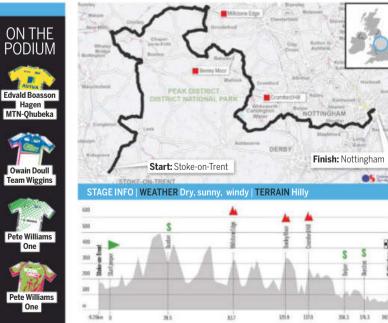
The team were then reduced to four riders during the stage, when saddle sores forced Andy Hawdon to abandon. Aged 39, the Cumbrian was making his race debut in the 2015 edition.

"He's learned a lot this week, and that's what I wanted of him.

"Age is just a number, he's not the oldest rider to ever take part in a bike race," said Pridham. "He told the kids to watch daddy on television, but they were more interested in Peppa Pig!"

The team's other four riders were part of a 75-man grupetto who finished outside the time cut, 45-47 behind stage winner Matteo Trentin, but were allowed to continue the race by commissaires.

'Everybody thinks it was really easy in the grupetto, but the terrain still made it hard," added Oliphant. "It only would have been [easy] had the stage have been flat."



# Stage 7 | Fakenham > Ipswich 227.1km Saturday September 12

# Greipel wins in photo finish

# German nudges ahead of Viviani in surge for line

Nick Bull

otto-Soudal got it right in the fourth bunch sprint of the race: after a good lead-out, André Greipel pipped Elia Viviani in a photo finish.

#### Greipel, at last!

Indeed, Marcel Sieberg and Jens Debusschere were with him in the final kilometre, and the pace they set was so high the peloton fragmented. The latter even managed to finish 10th in the Suffolk town.

#### Was the stage as frantic as Friday's?

Not quite, but still interesting.

Essentially there were two races within the race: one for the stage, one for the King of the Mountains jersey. Wouldbe challenger in the latter Tom Stewart (Madison-Genesis) got himself in the day's first break and moved level with competition leader Pete Williams on the day's first climb at Hevingham. However, Williams's One pulled the move back before another four-man move went clear shortly after Norwich.

#### Then what?

LottoNL-Jumbo's Bram Tankink was told to drop back from the quartet as he was still a GC threat. The

others - Alex Dowsett (Movistar) Graham Briggs (JLT-Condor) and Gabriel Cullaigh (GB) — quickly amassed a gap of nine minutes. Then Lotto-Soudal (targeting the stage win) and Madison (targeting the two final climbs) decided to chase.

#### What of the King of the **Mountains jersey?**

One's Chris Opie stopped Stewart from moving into the competition lead on climb two, denying him points at Barking Tye. The breakaway was caught just before Brantham Hill, where Williams took maximum points to secure the jersey.



# RESULTS

#### 1. André Greipel (Ger) Lotto-Soudal in 5-14-42

- 2. Elia Viviani (Ita) Šky
- 3. Sondre Holst Enger (Nor) IAM Cycling
- 4. Mark Renshaw (Aus) Etixx-Quick Step
- 5. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka 6. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins
- 7. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy
- 8. Jonas Van Genechten (Bel) IAM
- 9. Dylan van Baarle (Ned) Cannondale-Garmin 10. Jens Debusschere (Bel) Lotto-Soudal all at

#### General classification after stage seven 1. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka in 33-02-36

- 2. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky at 0-13
- 3. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy at 0-43
- 4. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-44 5. Zdenek Stybar (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step at 0-51
- 6. Rubén Fernández (Esp) Movistar
- 7. Steven Kruijswijk (Ned) LottoNL-Jumbo both at
- 8. Dylan van Baarle (Ned) Cannondale-Garmin at 0-59 9. Chris Anker Sørensen (Den) Tinkoff-Saxo 10. Xandro Meurisse (Bel) An Post-Chain Reaction

# Two jerseys for One thanks to Williams

#### Nick Bull

Pete Williams is the comeback-kid. In the space of two years since his previous Tour of Britain start, the 28-year-old has gone from the lows of the sport to winning two jerseys in the 2015 race.

"He's mentally strong," said One's CEO Matt Prior. "He's very driven and focused on the job, and he's been our stand-out

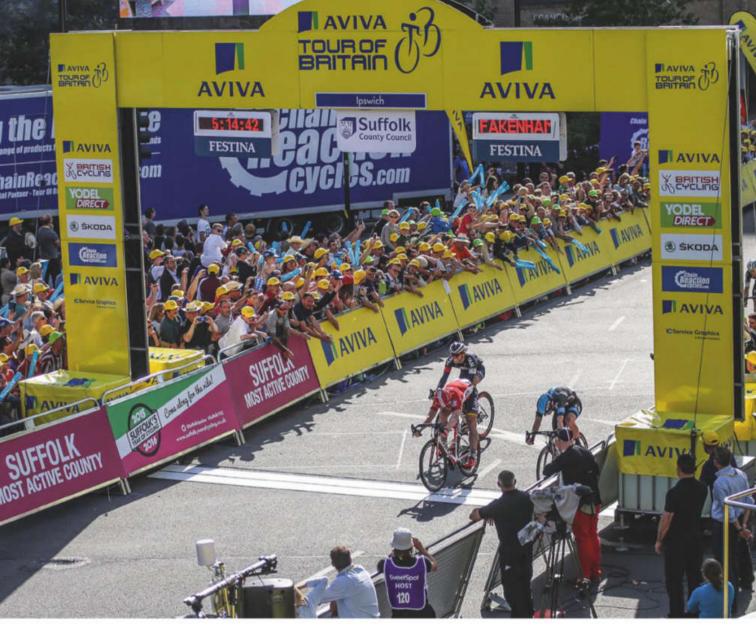
performer in the race."

While the sprints jersey took care of itself after the Skipton-based rider got in breakaway on three of the race's opening five stages, the King of the Mountains competition was only decided on the race's final climb in the sleepy village of Brantham.

His main contender Tom Stewart had to better his result on the climb: he didn't. "I think the Madison

boys were panicking a bit more than I was," Williams said of the sprint up the final KoM. "It's been a successful week, and a good way to end our first year."

Williams has previous in the Tour of Britain: he won the sprints classification in 2012, but a controversial commissaire's decision prevented a successful defence of it 12 months later.



ON THE PODIUM

**Edvald Boasson** 

Hagen MTN-Qhubeka

Owain Doull Team Wiggins

Having joined non-UClranked Haribo-Beacon for 2014 after IG-Sigma Sport's demise, he was knocked unconscious in a nasty crash at last year's Tour of the Reservoir.

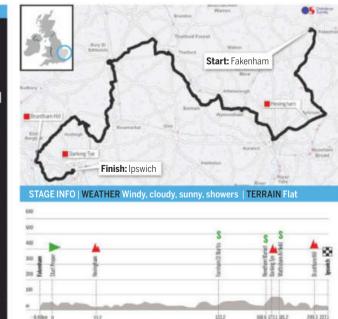
"This time last year I was in a team that wasn't able to be selected for the Tour of Britain," he added. "It's nice to repay One for taking a chance with me, with two jerseys."

Williams attributed part of his form to a two-week training camp in the French Alps last month: "I told my other half it was a holiday and she realised it was a training camp quickly," he added.

News that he will be retained for 2016 while One is likely move to Pro Continental level also helped.

"Everybody's on a high, surfing the wave of excitement ahead of next year," Williams said. "I've been doing this a while, doing the same races year in, year out. You spend your same weekends in the same places.

"To do something new is quite motivating, it's something to get my teeth in to."



# Stage 8 London 86.8km Sunday September 13

# Greipel pays dearly for blocking Viviani

Italian gets his third win as judges relegate German

Chris Marshall-Bell

he race ended as it started, with Elia Viviani taking the victory, albeit in more controversial circumstances.

Controversy, you say?

Yes. André Greipel was first across the line on Regent Street, but the Lotto-Soudal sprinter was relegated for deviating from his line. He had veered into Viviani's path, pushing the Italian towards the barriers on the uphill drag. Viviani — the blindside sprint perfectionist — was awarded the win after by the judges.

#### What did Greipel say?

He thought he had legally secured his second successive victory, protesting his innocence and saying that he opted for a sprinting line next to the barriers, unknowingly blocking Viviani.

Any hiccups for Edvald **Boasson Hagen in vellow?** 

Not really. He remained at the front for pretty much the entirety of the race, although an attempted dive-bomb on the final corner could have ended badly. There was one podium change: Owain Doull, winner of the points jersey,

claimed two bonus seconds in the first intermediate sprint to leapfrog Cult Energy's Rasmus Guldhammer to finish third overall.

#### What's the verdict on the new London circuit?

The race passed so many iconic landmarks that it would be a pity to go back to the traditional circuit around Whitehall and the Victoria Embankment, unusable this year due to Cycle Superhighway construction. The new 6.2km course was more technical, and looked spectacular on television.



# RESULTS

#### 1. Elia Viviani (Ita) Sky in 1-50-16

- 2. Juan José Lobato (Esp) Movistar 3. Matteo Trentin (Ita) Etixx-Quick Step
- 4. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka 5. Jens Debusschere (Bel) Lotto-Soudal
- 6. Sondre Holst Enger (Nor) IAM
- 7. Mark Renshaw (Aus) Etixx-Ouick Step 8. Graham Briggs (GBr) JLT-Condor
- 9. Ruben Zepuntke (Ger) Cannondale-Garmin 10. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins all at same time

#### Final general classification 1. Edvald Boasson Hagen (Nor) MTN-Qhubeka in 34-52-52

- 2. Wout Poels (Ned) Sky at 0-13
- 3. Owain Doull (GBr) Team Wiggins at 0-42
- 4. Rasmus Guldhammer (Den) Cult Energy at 0-43 5. Zdenek Stybar (Cze) Etixx-Quick Step at 0-51
- 6. Rubén Fernández (Esp) Movistar 7. Steven Kruijswijk (Ned) LottoNL-Jumbo both at
- 8. Dylan van Baarle (Ned) Cannondale-Garmin at 0 - 53
- 9. Chris Anker Sørensen (Den) Tinkoff-Saxo at 0-59 10. Xandro Meurisse (Bel) An Post-Chain Reaction

# UCI's hefty fines fuel criticism from managers

#### Nick Bull

Edvald Boasson Hagen was not the only winner in this year's Tour of Britain: fines issued to riders and team managers throughout the race meant the UCI's bank account did rather well, too.

In total, 12,100CHF (£8,100) was accrued. One rider was even disqualified Vincenzo Nibali-style. before André Greipel

was relegated to last in this stage. The team of officials. led by Canadian Wayne Pomario, were on the wrong end of several complaints from team managers, furious by their reportedly overzealous application of the rules.

"Maybe the governing body should be called UCIsis." said one prominent directeur sportif. "I disputed the fine I got, and the chief

commissaire [Pomario] said 'my word is final'.

"If I dispute a speeding ticket or parking fine the equivalent of this in everyday life — people have to provide proof.

"If they've got a picture of it, or video from a GoPro, then I have to pay. If they've just written something down, where's the evidence?"

Having had a queue of team managers waiting



to appeal their fines ahead of Tueday's stage start, judges issued just one fine during that day's racing. Nobody was reprimanded on the following stage, either.

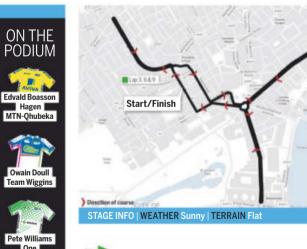
But things came to a head en route to Hartside Fell, when NFTO's James Lowsley-Williams was kicked off the race for holding on to his team car after a crash.

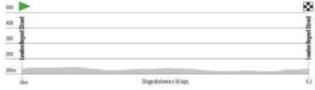
"Nibali deserved to be disqualified from the Vuelta — but this poor rider has been labelled a cheat and that's not true," said another DS, who saw the incident.

"Every fine and penalty is considered on the basis of what the commissaires see." Pomario told *CW*.

"We look at the situation and we make a discussion as to what the impact would be. It's not something we're looking to do. We've seen that some of the fines have led to behavioural changes.

"Also there's a lot of other things that people don't see: we may get information from the organisers, for example, that can impact on our decisions," he said.







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# TECH

# Should you slam your stem?

Running a very low stem may be a growing trend among pros, but would it make you faster — or merely put you at heightened risk of injury? *Henry Robertshaw* investigates

ake a look at most of the bikes in the pro peloton and you'll notice that most riders run their stem very low, often snug up against the headset. Slamming your stem, as this is known, is en vogue, but does it yield performance benefits for normal riders like you and me, or does it expose us to injury risk in pursuit of fashion?

The most obvious performance benefit from slamming your stem, and the reason that many pro riders such as Lotto-Soudal's Adam Hansen do it, is that a lower front end is more aerodynamic. According to Dr Xavier Disley, founder of AeroCoach, "A reduction in stack height by something like 20mm could easily save six to 10 watts in aerodynamic drag at around 20mph, if the cyclist reduced their torso angle accordingly."

However, this aerodynamic benefit only manifests itself if the rider is strong enough to maintain a low position. Indeed, Specialized aerodynamic R&D engineer Chris Yu thinks that the idea that lower equals faster is a big misconception. "In working with many of our pro athletes, we've found that it's

nearly 50/50 whether lower is better or worse aerodynamically," he said.

"Many times, lowering the stem can have unintended consequences such as causing additional shoulder strain that leads to a minutely higher head position, the net effect of which is a higher aero drag signature."

#### **Positioned for power**

Just as important, according to Yu, is finding a position that doesn't compromise power output. "Each athlete has a sweet spot that optimises the combination of aero drag and power output to achieve the fastest overall position. And for many athletes — myself included — that position is not necessarily slammed."

Disley agrees: "Any reduction in stack height needs to be evaluated against the individual's morphology and anthropometrics.

"If you have terrible flexibility, then you might be better served maintaining a lower position on the bars just by bending you arms a touch more rather than putting the stem lower."



Indeed, talk to most bike-fitters and they will tell you that flexibility is the most important factor when it comes to deciding whether to slam your stem. "The limiting factors are lower back and hip flex upper limits," says James Wakelin, senior bike-fitter at Condor Cycles, who stresses the importance of weight distribution with different styles of bikes and riding.

"Weight distribution will vary depending on the style of the bike. For example, a road/criterium race position will put much more weight on to your arms than a sportive rider set-up.





# Adam Hansen Lotto-Soudal rider

"I do it for aero reasons. If you can gain a 10-15-watt advantage from your normal

riding position, then do it. It's very difficult to improve your power by 10-15 watts, so if slamming your stem gives you free watts, then slam it and get used to it. Plus, it just looks the part."





# **James Wakelin**

Senior bike-fitter at Condor Cycles
"Only flexible riders should slam
their stem, as the limiting factors

are lower back and hip flex upper limits. I think most studies have shown that the aero effect is mainly down to a smooth style and narrow body posture."



"In essence, the basic rule is that you should be able to turn the pedals smoothly in the drops without affecting your hip rotation and putting too much stress on to the arms."

#### **Potential pitfalls**

So what are the potential pitfalls of slamming your stem without having the necessary flexibility? Unfortunately, injury seems to be a common outcome; Wakelin tells of numerous problems caused by riders slamming their stem. "I've seen customers experience massive pain in their hips and lower back from trying to run too little stack.

"I have also had a few customers who have ended up with big problems in the groin from applying too much pressure caused by a low front end."

If you're considering slamming your stem, the best advice is to consult a bike-fitter, who will tell you whether it's a feasible change for you. And if the answer is no, it's best to pay attention — unlike the customer who came to Wakelin for a bike-fit and then took it upon himself to fit a -17° stem at a later date. "He did have a few problems as a result of that..."

# **OUR TAKE**

If you're flexible enough, there's no reason not to slam your stem. If you can hold the position and keep your head and shoulders low, there are certainly aerodynamic benefits, especially when combined with narrower bars.

However, with cyclists not exactly renowned for their flexibility and upper body strength, slamming your stem could make you a less efficient rider and even put you at risk of injury, so it's best to have a bike-fit before you go cutting that steerer tube.

# **HOT STUFF**

# Therapearl Knee Wrap cold pack

If you suffer from knee pain after riding, this reusable Therapearl cold pack may be more effective than frozen peas. It has a Velcro strap to keep it in place and an opening to allow movement. £13.99 www.therapearl.co.uk
Report October



## **BMC Trackmachine TR01**

If it's good enough for Rohan Dennis in his Hour record attempt, then BMC's top track model should be apt for any discipline on the boards. It has a hinged fork and p2p stem, adjustable in length and height.

£2,590 www.evanscycles.com Report November



# Specialized S-Works 6 road shoe

Specialized S-Works shoes have been popular among pros and amateurs alike for the last few years. As this updated version hits the shelves in 2016, it's hard for us to not get a little bit excited. Though it's a similar design to the previous version, the shoe's construction has been changed and the

and the carbon sole reworked. £280 www. specialized. com



# Vittoria Qurano 46 wheelset £1,199.99

Product of the week

After a big launch late last year, it took Vittoria a while to actually get this

finished article out to the public.

Part of a three-model range (Qurano 60 and 84 are also available), the Qurano 46 features rim depths of 42mm up front and 46mm at the rear. They offer great all-round ability and was excellent during races. The low weight limits any lag on the climbs, and even though there is a minimal spoke count — 16f, 21r — they remain stiff enough for a svelte 66kg bunch sprinter. The Quranos also follow the wider rim trend, with a set of 25 tyres looking more like 28s and giving a nice ride feel.

Topped with a set of Vittoria's own Corsa SC, they looked the part too. *Symon Lewis* 

1,510g www.chickencycles. co.uk



# OneTen Tempo jersey £54.99

OneTen's Tempo is a good quality lightweight jersey that has proved comfortable and well ventilated through the warmer months. It's not a super-close fit, but there's no loose fabric or windflap either. There's quite a variety of fabrics used, with a lightweight

gridded material on the front and back panels and an even lighter fabric used for the sides. The sleeves are made of a more stretchy Lycra to ensure a good fit around the biceps and shoulders, and are not hemmed to ensure a clean, comfortable fit. There are reflectives at the back and a fourth zipped rear pocket. The full-length zip has protective flaps top and bottom, so that not only your chin but your shorts too won't suffer abrasion. Paul



# Continental GP Attack set £129.95

The Attack and Force tubular set from Continental, with its Tyre Positioning System, uses a wider rear (24mm) than the front (22mm) to offer what it claims is a better combination of agility, aerodynamics and rolling resistance than one tyre width alone. The smooth centre section and grippy Black Chilli compound made for a great set of fast, confidence-inspiring criterium tubs. They're not as fragile as some other similarly priced competitors, which helped when clattering over rougher tarmac, but are still light enough (248g front, 266g rear) to accelerate well. For the price we'd expect the latex tubes that the pros get but these are a great set of racing tubulars. Philip Glowinksi 514g pair www.conti-tvres.co.uk



Norman 90g

www.oneten

apparel.com

# Castelli Volo Bibshorts £80

The Volo bibshorts come mid-range for the Italian premium brand, and feature flatlock stitching, top quality 'Affinity Lycra' and mesh grippers on the legs. Castelli's 'Kiss Air' chamois has a multi-layered, variable density construction, with a soft microfibre and antibacterial treatment to prevent saddle sores. Having tested these on some long, hot rides, I found them supremely comfortable. Despite not being Castelli's



153g (size S) www.saddleback.co.uk



# Bontrager Flare R Tail Light £44.99

Nearly £50 on a rear light might seem extravagant, but given that it will probably offer more safety benefits than a £200 front light, it'll be worth it. This is especially the case with the super-bright Bontrager Flare R, with its 65 lumen bulb. There are four modes, with the most efficient offering up to 23 hours battery life, and a low energy mode to get you home when the power is running low. Recharging through a micro USB cable is really convenient, while the mount will fit all but the deepest aero seatpost. Henry Robertshaw **36g www.bontrager.com** 



# Blackmore North Hill bibshorts £99.99

With its black Lycra and white mesh bibs, the Blackmore North Hill bibshorts might not be the most eye-catching, but go for a ride and you'll realise how good these are. The dense 250gsm Lycra really hugs your legs, providing the same support as much more expensive shorts, while the leg bands, adorned with Blackmore logos, keep the shorts from riding up. The chamois is also superb. Well padded, although not to the



Ithough not to the point of getting in the way when riding in the drops, I am still picking these shorts whenever a long ride is looming. The only downside is that they don't drop very low, making toilet stops a little tricky. Henry Robertshaw

214g www.ride

214g www.ride blackmore.

# LONG TERM TEST

# Twelve months later

# Spiuk Z16R shoes £109.95

I love these Spiuk shoes. They might not be the stiffest out there, but they're among the most comfortable shoes I've ever worn. The only snag is that after only a couple of months' use, one of the buckles has come off. Less than ideal, but I can still pull it tight enough and look forward to many winter miles in these shoes. HR www.silverfish.com



# Can't live without Medi Pro Saddlebag

£19.99

With decent volume, clever reflective piping and strong Velcro straps for under the saddle and seatpost, this sturdy seatpack has been a key feature on all my training rides. It's priced well and hardwearing too. SL www.madison.co.uk





You can spend a lot more on a cycling jersey, but with this, dhb's top-end option, why you would? Made from a very lightweight material, the jersey is comfortable and keeps you nice and cool in hot weather, with a perforated back to let hot air escape. The close fit is impressive, especially as this jersey is half the price of aerodynamic tops from more fashionable brands. The three rear pockets are well sized, there's a zipped, sweatproof security pocket, and a women's version — all in all, a highly impressive piece of kit. Henry Robertshaw 123g www.wiggle.co.uk

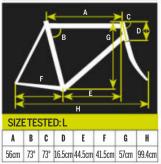
# **Vaaru Octane 6-4 £6,099 ₹**

Tested by: Chris Hovenden | Miles ridden: 175 | Size tested: 56 | Weight: 7.64kg (without pedals)

here is something about a bare titanium frame that appeals to many. Wherever I rode the Vaaru Octane 6-4 I received envious glares often accompanied by superlativeladen compliments. When James Beresford set up Vaaru Cycles earlier this year he

Vaaru Octane 6	5-4
£6.099	

Frame	10/10
Specification	9/10
Ride	10/10
Value	7/10
Distributor	www.vaarucycles.com
Frame	Titanium 6 AL/4V
Fork	Vaaru F:1 full carbon fork
Size range	53cm, 55cm, 56cm, 57cm, 59cm
Weight	7.64kg/16.13lb (without pedals)
Groupset	Shimano Dura-Ace 11 speed
Alterations	None
Gear ratios	52-36t/11-25
Wheels	Reynolds Assault SLG, full carbon clincher
Tyres	Continental Grand Prix GT 25mm
Bar & stem	Pro Ltd Stealth Evo fully integrated carbon bar and stem
Seatpost	USETitanium
Saddle	Fizik Antares VS



did so with a manifesto of using top quality design and production, without being held back by cost limitations, to create the best possible titanium bikes. First impressions suggest he succeeded.

In addition to offering a lower spec version of the Octane 6-4, Vaaru also offers the V:8 Di2 which has the same geometry but is Di2 specific and also has disc brakes.

#### Frame Aside from

the classic shiny unpainted look of the frame, the first things you notice are the smooth finish of the tubes, the neat welding and the subtle engraved Vaaru logos.

The grade five 6AL/4V titanium frame is designed in Chichester and manufactured in Taiwan in a titanium-specific factory. The premium cost associated with creating seamless and double-butted tubes out of 6AL/4V titanium appears to be justified. When stamping on the pedals on the flat or up steep climbs the bike felt light and sprightly, as well as stiff without flex. Further, the combination of Vaaru's own carbon forks

and the oval-shaped rear stays gave a comfortable ride without compromising responsiveness.

Unlike many top-end bikes the cables are externally routed. The thickness of the tubes has been optimised to keep the frame as light as possible — making it Di2 compatible would simply add weight, according to Vaaru.

#### Specification

No corners have been cut when it comes to

componentry. The Dura-Ace mechanical groupset worked superbly with the Rotor NoQ chainrings and Rotor 3D+ cranks, even when changing gear under load. Although one-piece carbon bars are not everyone's cup of tea, the Pro Ltd Stealth Evos look the part and felt comfortable even on poor road surfaces.

It is the wheels where companies often try to save money. Fortunately, the Reynolds Assaults were a





fine complement to the titanium frame, providing a fast and smooth ride.

#### Ride

As soon as I pushed down on the pedals I knew I was going to enjoy riding the Octane 6-4. Titanium frames are known for compliance rather than power transfer, but when I needed a sudden injection of pace the Octane 6-4 was impressively responsive.
The relatively low front end aided descending confidence, largely thanks to the combination of the Reynolds wheels and the Continental 25mm tyres, which at no point gave me any real concern, be it from crosswinds or fear of sliding out.

To test the bike's straightline speed I rode a 10-mile time trial. Although it did not





feel as fast as some similarly priced aero road bikes, considering that it is not built solely for speed it felt quick and coped well with the undulating course.

#### **Value**

By Vaaru's own admission, its bikes are made without compromises, and as a result the Octane 6-4 is a top-end piece of kit with a price tag of a little over £6,000.

Some may see the lack of electronic gears as a negative

and the carbon bars do divide opinion. On the other hand, there is a still a place for top quality mechanical gears — Alberto Contador uses them — and as long as you ensure you get the correct bar and stem, you will have a light, stiff and aero handlebar.

The Octane 6-4 is a racefocused bike that also works well as an all-rounder. If you are looking for a high-end titanium bike with an air of exclusivity, then there is little not to like about this one.

# **Verdict**

Titanium bikes have retained their popularity. They all look nice but at the same time can be hard to distinguish. Riding the Octane 6-4 you can be confident that not only are you riding an impressive looking bike but also that the frame is made from the highest quality titanium, accompanied by components you don't see every day.

The geometry was not overly aggressive and allowed me to ride comfortably in a forward or more upright position. The Octane 6-4 is a genuine top quality allrounder that is a pleasure to ride whether climbing

peaks or cruising along country lanes.

If you are happy to spend £6,000 on a bike that will make you stand out from the crowd, then of course you are spoiled for choice. But if it's a titanium dream bike that you have

your heart set on, then the Octane 6-4 is highly recommended.



# For

- Top quality titanium frame
- Comfortable
- Stiff

# **Against**

- One-piece carbon bars
- No internal cabling option
- Price

# **Energy bars**

# The must-have snack for nutrition on the go, *Paul Knott* tests five of the best

# What?

Varying in taste and texture, energy bars are an ideal nutrition source for any cyclist heading out on a long ride. Providing a more natural energy boost than liquid-based alternatives, the use of nuts and fruit pieces can be very attractive to riders who want to shift away from isotonic gels and drinks.

# Why?

The importance that the body places on utilising carbohydrates for glycogen stores cannot be underestimated. Glycogen depletion is one of the main reasons for muscle fatigue when out on the bike, however, overloading on carbohydrates doesn't mean your performance will increase, it could even be detrimental to your ride — finding a balance is crucial.

# How?

Topping up your carbohydrate stores can be done in a number of ways through isotonic drinks, energy gels and of course energy bars. When exercising, the body requires up to 65 grams of carbohydrates per hour to replace what has been lost and to maintain the same level of performance. If you are only heading out for a short ride of under 90 minutes don't worry too much about loading up on energy bars as the body will already have sufficient glycogen stores to get you through.

# **HOW WE SCORE**

- 10 Superb, best in its class and we couldn't fault it.
- 9 Excellent, a slight change and it would be perfect
- 8 Brilliant, we'd happily buy it
- 7 Solid, but there's better out there
- **6** Pretty good, but not quite hitting the mark
- 5 OK, nothing wrong with it, but nothing special
- 4 A few niggles let this down
- 3 Disappointing
- **2** Poor, approach with caution
- 1 Terrible, do not buy this product

# SiS Go Energy Bar £31.49 for box of 30

SiS's Go Energy Bar is the joint biggest bar on this test, which may be a bit too big for some people to consume on the bike. SiS does sell a smaller 40g SiS Go Energy Bar which could prove more manageable to consume on the move, but it does come with reduced nutrition benefits when compared to the bigger bar,

which contains an ideal 42 grams of carbohydrates.

The bar is moist and easy to digest and is arguably the best tasting bar on the test, something you probably

Nutrition per serving 42g carbs

wouldn't think was out of place in the confectionary aisle in your local supermarket. With four flavours to pick from, ranging from apple and blackcurrant to chocolate and orange, the variety of tastes should suit most cyclists. However it is not only size which could cause problems when on the bike, as the wrapper is also quite tricky to open. The bar may stay fresher for longer, but this could cause problems if you don't pre-open the bar before you set off.

Weight: 65g 227kcal 8.1g protein www.scienceinsport.com



# High5 Energy Bar £29.75 for a box of 25

Perhaps best known for its energy gels, High5's energy bar maintains a solid reputation for producing good quality, valuefor-money nutrition products. One of the main plus points of High5's easy-to-open energy bar is that it is one of the cheapest bars in this test. However, just because it is reasonably priced

doesn't mean it scrimps on nutrition or taste by any stretch of the imagination. Each bar provides 42 grams of carbohydrates, which is more than the majority of the

Nutrition per serving 42g carbs

bars on this test. This is also combined with a moist texture that is easy to digest and means you don't have to rely on slurping some fluid to help wash it down.

Available in a variety of flavours (wild berry, banana, coconut and peanut) that cover the needs of fruit and nuts lovers alike, High5 has produced a dependable and good value energy bar that more than carries its own when compared to other, higher profile brands.

Weight: 60g 195kcal 2g protein www.highfive.co.uk



# Powerbar Energize £37.50 for a box of 25 £42 for a box of 30

The Energize bar hits the mark with 39 grams of carbohydrates as well as just under six grams of protein, which can help repair and build muscle tissue that may start to be broken down during the ride.

While the nutrition benefits are clear enough, the texture of the bar is

questionable. It is tough and chewy - one of the main benefits of energy bars is their convenience to eat when on the move. combined with fast, hassle

Nutrition per serving

free digestion. Unfortunately Powerbar's Energize bar does bare a slight resemblance to a Drumstick sweet, making it difficult to consume and wash down on the bike. In spite of this, there are no less than eight flavours to choose from, ranging from berry to cookies and cream. Regrettably when compared to the other bars in this group test, the disappointing texture stands out as the defining factor from the bunch

Weight: 55g 199kcal 5.8g protein www.powerbar.eu



# CNP Energy Bar

CNP is the official supplier of nutritional products to British Cycling and Team Sky and this partnership seems to have rubbed off on CNP's energy bars. CNP has created an energy bar that uses a premium blend of high-quality carbohydrates that focus purely on results without worrying too much

about what it may look like from the outside. Each bar provides 39 grams of carbohydrates so you can perhaps let CNP off for the dry and slightly

Nutrition per serving

manufactured texture, especially when the satisfyingly fruity taste hits your taste buds. This texture does mean that the bar can be potentially a little tough to chew, especially if you are parched when out on a ride. At 56 grams each, the bars are the perfect size to consume and are available to buy in both banana or berry flavours. CNP has produced a solid energy bar that you can reliably call upon when you need an energy boost.

Weight: 56g 187kcal 5.8g protein www.cnpprofessional.co.uk



# **Honey Stinger** Energy Bar £27.75 for a box of 15

As the brand name suggests, Honey Stinger's bars are made with over 30 per cent of the gold stuff. They are lighter and sweeter tasting when compared to the more traditional fruitbased energy bars that feature in this group

test. The Honey Stinger bars are available in two flavours peanut butter and honey and rocket chocolate, both of which are easy to digest. However, despite the great

Nutrition per serving

taste, each bar only provides 26 grams of carbohydrates. This may be useful for a middle of the day energy lift, but isn't sufficient as your sole refuelling option when out on the bike for any significant amount of time. Therefore you would be required to complement your Honey Stinger bar consumption alongside other high carbohydrate products such as gels, isotonic drinks or multiple energy bars if you don't want to risk being struck by the bonk on your ride.

Weight: 50g 346kcal 5g protein www.honeystingeruk.co.uk



# FITNESS

# How do I... use compression garments?

Cycling Weekly investigates how to get the best from the latest recovery kit

**Paul Knott** 

ompression garments have recently come to the fore as a recovery aid, but what are their benefits and how are they used effectively? Arnaud Ménétrier, of Compressport International, explains what happens to the body after physical activity and how compression garments can help.

"Gravity causes blood and toxins to stagnate in the legs after physical activity. The veins attempt to combat this: muscles contract and press on them to activate venous return. This is similar [to squeezing] a tube of toothpaste to help [the paste] rise out of the tube," Ménétrier says.

"Without full muscle contraction, the blood will accumulate in the legs, causing swelling, pain and discomfort. This in turn will prolong the recovery process along with increased inflammation, muscle damage and DOMS. This is evident when you get the sensation of heavy legs after a long trip in a car after a ride.

"Compression garments replicate the pressing motion by the muscles to maintain a continuous pump action. Venous return is improved, blood circulation is increased by 20 per cent and swelling is prevented. This means you will be ready to perform again quicker."

The importance of compression garments within the professional peloton is highlighted by Madison-Genesis soigneur Russell Kingston: "They are very useful for travelling to and from an event, even for a recreational rider, as it's never ideal to sit still in a car after doing a 100-mile sportive; you're suddenly going from being really active to really inactive — especially if you've got a two-hour journey after riding for over four hours."

However, while compression wear may be endorsed as beneficial by

manufacturers and pro teams, there is no such consensus in the scientific community. Though compression wear has been shown to provide marginal recovery improvements, with regard to improving performance during exercise, Born et al. (2013) stated that these garments were found to be unsuccessful. In a number of further studies, compression garments have been shown to be ineffective in reducing injuries such as muscular or joint pains.

**DO** follow care guidelines to extend the life of your compression garment **DO** replace your compression garments if they start to lose their elasticity **DO** try out different compression garment brands, to find the one that works best for you

### Essential points

- Compression garments are available for calves, quadriceps and arms.
- The fit of the compression garment is crucial; if it is loose, it isn't maximising the recovery process.
- Compression garments can be useful if you are sedentary after a long ride.
- Regular arm- and leg-warmers aren't compression garments.
- Compression shouldn't be used as your only recovery technique.



Go one size smaller than you normally take.

Derek Hobbs

If I'm training in the evening, I wear them overnight and feel far less fatigued in my legs than without them.

Wendy Loveday



Just a gimmick to sell stuff...

Make sure you use medical grade Gautam Khanna compression garments only.

Mat Richer

Compression socks have been a great help in my recovery from an ankle injury.

Tom Turcon

I wear compression socks while riding and relax in an Epsom salt bath afterwards.

Jessica Lexi

# Things to do this week

## Eat beetroot

Adding beetroot to your diet, or a beetroot drink, may — studies have indicated — improve your cycling performance. Drinking beetroot juice before cycling has been seen to increase power outputs by seven to 11 per cent at no additional oxygen cost. Alongside its claimed performance benefits, beetroot contains blood pressure-lowering and dementia-preventing compounds.

# Remobilise your back

A cyclist's back can be the most troublesome part of the body, and is often mistreated both off and on the bike. This movement helps increase the mobility of the back muscles, which may be have become stiff from a long ride or a long week at work.

- Lie down on your side and support your head with a cushion.
- Hook your top leg underneath the knee of your opposite leg and stretch out your arms in front of you with your palms together.
- Making sure your knees and bottom hand remain in contact with the floor, slowly rotate the top arm over your body in an arc shape as far as it can go without lifting your bent knee or opposite arm off the floor.

■ Maintain eye contact with the moving arm by slowly moving your head. Hold this position for two seconds, before slowly returning to the starting position.

■ Complete 10 reps on each side.



If you are bored of the usual energy bars and gels, you can now mix up your ride nutrition by adding a Honey Stinger waffle. Light in weight and taste, each waffle provides 20g of carbohydrates and is available in honey, strawberry and lemon flavours, so there should be one to suit your palate. £15.50 for a box of 16 waffles www.honeystingeruk.co.uk





# Weight loss v power

Shedding a few pounds can be good for your health — and your cycling — but there's a balance to be struck between losing weight and starving your power output

Words: Vicky Ware

hen trying to make fast gains in speed on the bike, it can be difficult to know where to start. There's plenty of advice on which training works best, what to eat and how much to rest, but which area will give you the biggest gains, and fastest?

Your power-to-weight ratio is one of the most important factors determining how fast you can go on a bike. To go faster, you need to increase the number of watts you can produce for each kilo of bodyweight. If you're riding uphill and working against gravity, this aspect is absolutely crucial, but even when riding on the flat, it affects acceleration.

If you weigh 70kg and produce 300 watts at functional threshold power (FTP) — your highest sustainable power — you have a power-to-weight ratio of 4.29 at FTP. The higher this number, the faster you will go.

#### Losing weight

One way of increasing your power-to-weight ratio is by lowering your weight. Weighing 65kg with a threshold power of 300 watts gives you a power-to-weight ratio of 4.62. You could also increase this all-important number by maintaining your weight but increasing your power through training to improve your FTP. Weighing 70kg with a threshold of 324 watts would also give you a power-to-weight ratio of 4.62, meaning you'll be the same speed uphill as someone who weighs 65kg but produces only 300 watts at threshold.

The basic question is, which is more achieveable: losing 5kg or gaining 24 watts at threshold? Elliot Lipski, lead scientist at Train Sharp Cycle Coaching and an MSc in applied exercise physiology, explains: "Weight loss [is easier]; however, if it is achieved by

dehydration or fasting, this will have a negative effect on performance."

The impact of losing weight too quickly while continuing to train can also negatively affect performance. Lipski says: "If you strip weight too quickly, or ineffectively, you will open yourself up to illness, muscle deterioration and ultimately a fall in performance."

Weight loss, especially if the end goal is sports performance, needs to be done in a way that ensures your body continues to get the nutrients it needs to rebuild muscle damaged by training, and maintain a strong immune system. This will aid recovery and prevent you from getting ill. If you lose weight too quickly, you're probably doing it by giving your body too few of the calories it needs to perform daily functions. Even in the short term, this is bad for general health and athletic performance.

It's possible to lose weight while training, but you'll have to think through your training and eating plan to ensure your body has the building blocks it needs to benefit from training. Frances Newstead, a cycling coach and ex-Great Britain cycling team athlete, advises: "Generally, the time to focus on weight loss is during a base phase or lowintensity block when reducing fuel won't affect training too much."

During this period, you'll be focused

"Consider the positives: the more weight you have to lose, the more you have to gain in terms of cycling fitness"

on long rides with slightly lower intensity than during a build period — the latter occurs just before racing season begins and is the time when you'll see an increase in FTP, provided you do the right training.

#### **Gaining power**

If you're already at the lower end of your healthy weight, your only option is to increase your power. There are short cuts to increase threshold power; the only option is to do the right training. To increase your power, you'll have to optimise your training, train consistently and recover effectively.

Working with a good coach and having enough time to work on your training consistently for a long period will help. Gaining power can be tricky, but if you're overweight and manage to lose some excess pounds while maintaining your current threshold power, you're certain to see increases in speed.

#### Lose weight and gain power

Losing weight at the same time as gaining power is the ultimate way to improve your speed over time. Lipski explains this is the best training strategy, so long as it's done over a realistic timescale: "The most effective way to improve your watts per kilogram is to increase power and decrease weight. They do not have to be exclusive."

Being realistic with weight loss involves making changes to diet that you intend to stick with. Fad diet plans are generally unproven for either health or long-term weight loss, and also tend to be aimed at people whose default lifestyle is sedentary.

Lipski says: "Weight loss must be achieved through gradual, targeted work. There is no such thing as an ideal 'diet plan' or 'detox'. A healthy, balanced diet alongside a slight calorie deficit will lead to weight loss, and ultimately, increase in power-to-weight."

Hayley Simmonds is an expert in this regard, having lost 45kg since turning to cycling in 2010. She is the current British time trial champion, and over the past five years has improved her cycling

# 'Measure everything'

Measure everything: keep a record of your weight, your training and your power so you can monitor your progress. Weight loss happens slowly; being dehydrated or crash dieting may reduce your weight but will also reduce your performance.

Know your weight window: you don't have to be at your lowest 'fighting' weight all year round. Have a window of a 2-3kg acceptable zone for your weight. Particularly in your off-season, maintaining a very low weight is neither easy nor healthy.

Weight loss and power increase: aim to work on both together for maximum performance improvements.

Use gadgets and apps to help: tools — such as myfitnesspal.com — are a great way of keeping track of your diet and weight loss.

ability while decreasing her weight. Simmonds agrees with a consistent approach: "I think [one] thing that has really helped me is that I've been very patient and lost the weight very slowly over several years [...] instead of trying to crash diet and get down to a lower weight too quickly."

Why is this important? Newstead explains: "Losing large amounts of weight quickly will result in an initial loss of power. Aim to lose weight over a long period of time and the power shouldn't be affected."

Simmonds has managed to perfectly balance weight loss and power gain: "My functional threshold power has gone up continually since I started cycling, while I have also been losing weight consistently during that period." How did she achieve this? "Initially I had a lot of weight to lose, so generally I just trained to improve as a cyclist and the weight took care of itself. Now that I'm quite close to my optimal race weight, I have to be a lot more careful," she explains. Being more careful involves "monitoring my training [via a power meter] and diet very carefully and making adjustments where necessary."

The ease with which you lose weight or gain power is related to other factors too, believes Newstead: "It depends on your willpower and how much weight you need to lose. Generally, gaining power is easier, as it requires you to ride your bike, which is an enjoyable activity.



Watching what you eat and cutting back on treats isn't so much fun."

#### Using a power meter

If you have a power meter, you'll be able to see whether you're improving your power to weight ratio by conducting a power test to calculate your FTP. If you don't train with a power meter, it will be difficult to know if you're losing power while losing weight. A power meter may also stop you getting fixated on your weight because it would be clear if your threshold power started to drop or your power-to-weight ratio started to get worse rather than better.

Heart rate won't tell you anything about your power-to-weight. If you don't have a power meter, you could use your time on your local time trial course or a hill near your home to monitor your speed versus your weight. If doing this, bear in mind that your speed will be affected by weather conditions and which bike you ride — unlike the numbers you'd get from a power meter.

Simmonds has used a power meter to monitor her weight loss and power gains and believes it is a key reason for her improvement. "One of the reasons I've been so successful in never sacrificing my power in order to lose weight is



that me and my coach are both very fastidious about monitoring everything about my training and diet, and make continual adjustments to ensure that I'm still losing weight but not at the expense of my training quality," she explains.

#### Train heavy, train hard

Are there any positives to be gained from training while overweight? Newstead says: "The only advantage to being over race weight is in the winter when an extra layer [of fat] helps fight off the colds and keeps you healthy.

"My advice to riders is to have a weight 'window' covering 2-3kg over a

season, when you aim to achieve your optimum race weight for your main goal. Maintaining this weight year round isn't realistic or necessary."

There may be a reason to be slightly heavier at some times of the year, but is there a silver lining to being more significantly overweight? Simmonds suspects there is an advantage to training while heavy, but says, "I couldn't give you a physiological reason why. It's unlikely to be [solely] leg strength effect."

Simmonds has also found there's a psychological advantage to having been heavier in the past. "It is far easier going uphill now, having experienced what it is

like to do it carrying much more weight. I really enjoy climbing now and have turned it into one of my strengths."

Lipski thinks there may be some advantage to training heavy but also clear disadvantages. "You will be far better off being a sustainable, low weight and increasing your mass via wearing a weighted vest or rucksack," he explains. "It's far easier to take off a 20kg jacket than it is 20kg of fat!"

One way to set out on a weight loss mission is to consider the positives: the more weight you have to lose, the more cycling you'll have to do, and the greater your improvement potential.

#### Can you go too low?

Trying to be as lean as Chris Froome while holding down a full-time job and all the other commitments that come with non-pro-cycling life is probably not advisable, as it's likely to end with exhaustion. Pros like Froome are monitored by doctors who ensure they're at the top of their game and not becoming too depleted.

Unless you can say the same about your lifestyle, getting down to his weight will most likely leave you with little energy for training, and more susceptible to coughs and colds, as your immune system may lack the energy to fight infection. This is a further reason to lose weight gradually over a realistic period.

Newstead adds: "Balancing work, family and training takes a lot of mental strength. Adding weight loss to that can be tough. I try to encourage long-term changes to a rider's diet that will elicit weight loss over a long period of time; the weight is more likely to stay off."

Shedding a few pounds is usually the quickest way to improve your powerto-weight ratio. But if you're already lean, your only option is to increase your power output. Training with a power meter will allow you to see whether you're improving your power to weight ratio, rather than just losing weight. Once you've started on the road to improvement, you'll have more motivation to continue. As Lipski points out: "Success breeds further success... when the rider sees the fruits of their labours, they are motivated to continue. Realistic and regularly checked targets are critical to maintenance of a plan."

Simmonds concludes with similar advice: "Be patient and be consistent."

# Tinkoff-Saxo's Diet in a day



# Hannah Grant | Role: team chef | From: Copenhagen, Denmark

annah Grant has been head chef with Tinkoff-Saxo for five seasons, since being hired at the beginning of 2011. Prior to working in cycling, she trained as a chef at the culinary institute in Denmark

before graduating in 2007 and went on to work at the worldrenowned restaurant Noma in Copenhagen.

Earlier this year Grant completed her fifth Tour de France with the team, which was her 14th Grand Tour, and she has just finished working with the team on the Vuelta.

During this time, she has also released her own cookbook called *The Grand Tour Cookbook* based on meals she prepares for the team during gruelling three-week stage races. We spoke to
Grant two days before
the Tour de France Grand
Départ in Utrecht, about
the process of cooking for a
professional cycling team and
to find out what was on the
team's race menu.

## Breakfast

For breakfast it is the standard stuff really: freshly baked rolls, muesli, porridge, all kinds of cereals, eggs, yoghurt. I can't say who eats the most at breakfast. Being just before the start of the Tour, the whole team are all going to eat less because they aren't riding as much as they do in the race. When the Tour starts, they will all start pigging out.

#### CW says:

Porridge, with its slow-release energy, is the breakfast of choice for most cyclists, and that is no different at Tinkoff-Saxo. Muesli and low-sugar cereals are also ideal choices for breakfast, providing the perfect remedy to boost carbohydrates stores in the morning.

Luckily for the Tinkoff-Saxo team, they have a variety of breakfast options provided for them each morning. Even though porridge may be the traditional choice for optimum performance on race day, on rest days, when the team may go for a relatively gentle spin, having a variety of foods available can help refresh a cyclist psychologically from eating the same foods every day.



**60/** kcalories

67.6g carbohydrates

28g 13g fat



# Lunch

For lunch we are having Spanish tortillas with lots of vegetables, quinoa, some lentils, a nice tuna salad — keeping it light with lots of green vegetables — and some home-baked bread.

As they aren't riding as much today, their carbohydrate levels need to be kept lower than on a usual day. They are pretty busy off the bike today, so they are only going for a short ride before their press conference later and team presentation.

## CW says:

Team chefs are known to mix up their menus on non-race days and training camps; usually they would not have to cook lunches for riders, since they eat on the move.

Grant's use of quinoa and lentils is ideal, as these foods are great sources of protein, with

quinoa also containing anti-inflammatory nutrients that fight off diseases.

These grains are also great for vegetarian and vegan cyclists, some of whom may struggle to get enough protein in their diet. Serving fresh vegetables with tortillas is ideal when the weather is hot, as was the case in Utrecht, where the mercury was consistently hitting 35°C during the days leading up to the Grand Départ.

## Dinner

Tonight we are having chicken with roast potatoes, grilled aubergines and fennel; and we will probably have some nice coleslaw or some cold soup, as conditions are really warm. We get the chickens whole, so we break them down, and then you know they are super-fresh.

Rune [Grant's apprentice chef at Tinkoff-Saxo] is going to marinate them into a few different versions, keeping one simple. When you cook chicken on the bone, it is superjuicy - a nicer way to cook it, I think. At the beginning of the races, it is all about keeping it light and fresh, so we don't cook any pasta or rice because the riders are going to have enough of that during the Tour.

### CW says:

The benefit of having a team chef means that the riders meals can be adapted according to specific allergies, needs and tastes. You can replicate this at home. However, it does take preparation and planning. Grant has adapted her menu to the hot weather by serving cold soup. The chicken not only looks delicious but it is also a high-protein meat; protein is a vital addition to every post-ride meal. These are complemented with roast potatoes to replenish carbohydrates stores, covering all the nutritional elements needed in a post-ride meal.



don't take into account products that may have been consumed on the bike, such as energy gels, bars and isotonic drinks, or postride recovery drinks to replenish and boost energy and protein

Life with the team

We have to prepare three

meals each day for some very

hungry guys, so we have to do

exactly what we would do in a

ahead and preparing lots of

restaurant. This means thinking

portions of everything, as it can

be overwhelming to start from

scratch. For example, breaking

down and marinating 10 whole

chickens takes a long time. We

but reserve a table in the hotel

restaurant or banqueting room

cook everything out here [in the Tinkoff-Saxo food truck1

For more information and to purchase The Grand Tour Cookbook visit www. musettepublishing.net.



CW savs:

and serve it in there.

These total daily nutrition results stores immediately after a ride.



DAILY INTAKE

56.6g 291.7g carbohydrates

kcalories

protein







802

kcalories

100g carbohydrates

60.9g protein

**24.2**g

1045

124.7g carbohydrates

56.2g protein

hotos: Mike Prior, Daniel Gould. Food preparation and styling: Lauren Archdeacon , Jason Hardy

# The effect of cadence on endurance

# Aerobic fitness could mitigate the impact of a shift in pedalling rpm

**George Winter** 

Changes in pedalling cadence impact on performance, and the cardiac and metabolic systems. Studies have shown repeatedly that the faster you pedal, the shorter the time until exhaustion. The reason is thought to be reduced muscle efficiency at high cadences.

However, a recent study reported in the European Journal of Applied Physiology was the first to compare muscle oxygenation of the thigh muscle during heavy cycling exercise. French and Belgian researchers led by Dr Houssem Zorgati investigated the 'Effect of pedalling cadence on muscle oxygenation during high-intensity cycling until exhaustion: a comparison between untrained subjects and triathletes'.

They recruited nine untrained males (average age 21.3) and nine triathletes (average age 25.4, with a minimum of three years' competition experience), who cycled until exhaustion at an

intensity that corresponded to 90 per cent of the power output achieved at peak oxygen uptake at 40rpm and 100rpm. Exhaled gases and the rate of thigh muscle deoxygenation were both monitored.

The main finding was that thigh muscle deoxygenation was significantly higher at 40rpm compared to 100rpm during exercise to exhaustion in untrained cyclists — but not in the triathletes. The cycling time to exhaustion was also significantly higher at 40rpm than 100rpm in the untrained cyclists — but not the triathletes.

The authors concluded that high aerobic fitness allows for a better regulation of muscle oxygenation and deoxygenation following a change in pedalling cadence.

They also stated the difference in the time until exhaustion in the untrained compared with the triathletes showed "aerobic fitness of the subjects is the most important factor in the relationship between pedalling cadence and performance".







# INGREDIENTS:

For the yoghurt sauce

■ 200g low fat
natural yoghurt

■ Salt and black papers

- Salt and black pepper
   Pinch of ground cumin
  - Pinch of ground coriander

#### For the duck

- 1tsp ground cumin ■ 1tsp ground coriander
  - ½ tsp salt
- ■2 large duck breasts, skin on (0.5kg)
- 1tbsp pomegranate molasses

#### For the rice

- 25g unsalted butter
- ■1 cinnamon stick
  - ■1 cardamom pod, lightly crushed
    - ■1 bay leaf
  - Pinch of saffron (optional)
  - Salt and ground black pepper
- 250g basmati rice
  - Seeds of one pomegranate
- 2 small Pink Lady apples, unpeeled, cored and diced
  - Large bunch of flat leaf parsley, chopped
  - 25g shelled pistachios, roughly chopped

# **METHOD:**

1) Combine the yoghurt sauce ingredients in a bowl. Chill in the fridge until ready to use. 2) Pre-heat a frying pan, Mix the spices and salt. Dry the duck with kitchen towel. 3) Rub the duck breasts with the spice mix. Pat dry again. Place the breasts skin-side down in the pan. 4) Fry over a low to medium heat for about seven minutes. Turn and cook the other side. Leave to rest on a warm plate. 5) While the duck cooks, melt the butter in another pan. add the cinnamon, cardamom. bay leaf, saffron, salt and pepper. Stir the spices for a minute, and then add the rice. Cover the rice, just, with water. Once boiling, stir, then cover and simmer for eight minutes. 7) Turn off the heat and leave the rice covered for five more minutes. Fluff up the rice, then stir in the pomegranate seeds, apple and parsley. 8) Warm the pomegranate

molasses in the pan used to cook the duck. Carve the duck,

9) Serve the duck on the rice.

sprinkled with the pistachio

and chopped parsley. Serve

the voghurt sauce on the side.

and add to the molasses.

# TAKE HOME TRAINING SESSION

# Test your progress

Variation in your performance from session to session is normal, so how do you know if you're genuinely improving? Wattbike's Eddie Fletcher explains how.

taken:

20min

You may have completed a training workout faster on with a lower heart rate than previously, or raced a time trial faster than before. But how do you know it's a genuine

do you know it's a genuine improvement and not just a variation in performance?

A simple
20-minute session
every four weeks will do
the trick. You'll need to
be able to record your
heart rate data every
minute so that you can
analyse it afterwards.
Your road bike, indoor
trainer or Wattbike will
also need a power meter
so that you can stick to
the set power intensities.

Time (minutes)	Cadence (RPM)	Zone	
0-5	1	90	
5-15	2-3	95	
15-20	1	90	

If completing this test on the road, try to use a consistently flat section to avoid skewing results from test to test.

Start with a Zone

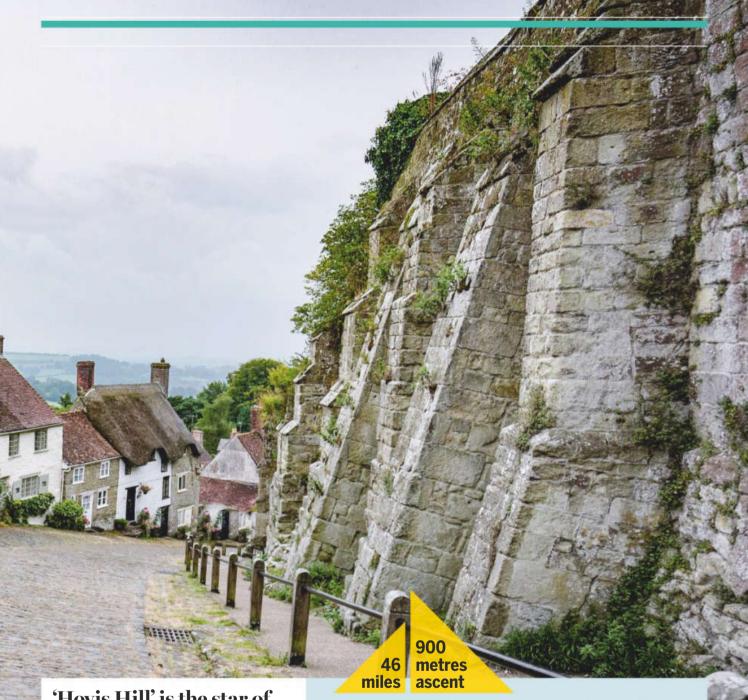
1 warm up for
five minutes
at 90rpm on
a low gear
at half your
functional
threshold power

(FTP). Then 10 minutes at 90-95rpm at 70 per cent of your FTP (Zone 2-3). Cool down for five minutes at 90rpm on a low gear at 50 per cent of your FTP (Zone 1). Plot your heart rate for every minute on a graph. Compare this heart rate curve every four weeks. — you're looking for a reducing heart rate trend

over time, that shows a genuine physiological improvement, and also any trend highlighting a period of improvement or deterioration.

Effort	You can	It feels like you're	Use it for	% Max heart rate	% FT power
Easy Zone 1	Chat freely	Warming up	Warm-ups, cool-downs and recovery	60-65%	56-75%
Steady Zone 2	Speak one sentence at a time	Riding along in the bunch on the flat	Long rides	65-75%	76-90%
Brisk Zone 3	Speak a few words at a time	Breathing deeply and working hard	Long efforts of 10 to 20min	75-82%	91-105%
Hard Say only Really attacking Zone 4 one word (perhaps on a climb) at a time		Efforts lasting 2-8min	82-89%	106-120%	
Very hard Zone 5	Grunt and gasp	Sprinting	Efforts lasting less than 2min	89%-MHR	121%+





# 'Hovis Hill' is the star of this varied challenge in Wiltshire and Dorset

he Wiggle Gold Rush CX is a new sportive and the latest addition to the ever-growing list of events mixing on-road and off-road sections. It includes country lanes and unsurfaced byways, and even the cobbles of Shaftesbury's Gold Hill. You may know it better as 'Hovis Hill' after the iconic TV advert. While you won't have to ride up on a delivery bike, basket overflowing with loaves, Gold Hill is still a serious challenge and a definite highlight.

# Where is it?

The Wiggle Gold Rush CX Sportive starts and ends in Salisbury on the eastern edge of the Cranborne Chase AONB. It travels in a westerly direction following a mix of roads and byways through the rolling Wiltshire and Dorset countryside, to Shaftesbury and back.

# Why ride it?

CX and adventure cross sportives are still relatively new in the UK, but with events inching their way into the calendar they are becoming increasingly popular. While the miles are generally lower don't underestimate the challenge they offer. They're great fun, and with a mix of terrain, are ideal for improving your bike-handling skills.

# History

The Gold Rush CX
Sportive started life
four years ago as the
Salisbury Saxon CX
Sportive. For 2015
the route has been
tweaked to include more
gravel riding and less
technical singletrack.
A new highlight is
Shaftesbury's 25 per
cent cobbles on Gold
Hill from which the event
takes its inspiration.

## **HQ details**

The start is at Salisbury Racecourse, on the south-western side of Salisbury. From London or the South-West, easiest access is via the A303.

## Where to stay

As a major tourist town, Salisbury has loads of options, but Wilton is nearer the start. Options here include the famous Pembroke Arms Hotel (www. pembrokearms.co.uk) and cyclist-friendly Karibu B&B (www. karibubandb.co.uk).

### Where to eat

The restaurant at the Pembroke Arms serves all the favourites, while a popular pub with good food is the Greyhound.

#### Local bike shop

Salisbury has a few bike shops; handiest for the sportive start is Nash's Cycles on Wilton Road (www. nashcycles.co.uk).



We headed out to ride the new route, which takes on more miles of the historic drove roads that criss-cross the area, and less technical singletrack than the event's predecessor, the Salisbury Saxon CX. It's ideal for cyclo-cross bikes and the new breed of gravel racers. Having said that, the Gold Rush could be ridden on just about any bike. At previous CX events, we've seen everything from full-suspension mountain bikes to standard road hacks and commuter hybrids alongside dedicated cross bikes.

From the sportive start at Salisbury Racecourse, the route meanders along the picturesque Ebble Valley on flat roads for a few miles, but at Broad Chalke there's a steep climb up Knowle Hill. The key to success here is to stick it in a low gear and go up slowly, saving a bit of energy for later when

the going gets tough. Once at the top, a right turn leads to the unsurfaced track called Ox Drove, which follows the crest of the ridge. It's a wonderful open section through rolling downland, with spectacular views across the valley. The next highlight is Zig-Zag Hill on the B3081, famous for being part of the "most bendy road in Britain", but at this point in the ride it's a lovely swooping downhill section.

With 22 miles done, the route approaches Shaftesbury and Gold Hill. But first there's an extra test on the legs: French Mill Lane. It's a narrow climb between hedges and earth banks, with overhanging trees making it tunnel-like and appear even steeper.

#### Final push

There's a short rest as the road flattens out, then a sharp right turn leads into Gold Hill itself. This hill never fails to challenge and entertain in equal measure. On sportive day (October 18) there'll probably be a crowd of spectators, so you'll get a cheer as you struggle to keep your bike moving.

A few easy miles are blessed relief, until the route returns to Zig-Zag Hill — this time a steep climb up — followed by a spectacular off-road section across Win Green.

Last year's Salisbury Saxon was wet so this section was tricky, with deep ruts and puddles

to test bike-handling skills. If it's the same this year, you'll need to concentrate, but look up occasionally — there are amazing views.

Just beyond Alvediston comes the last big climb of the day, a muscle-straining haul from the valley up Middle Down to reach the crest of the ridge and Old Shaftesbury Drove. Once at the top, the reward is a fantastic eight-mile stretch of slightly downhill gravel track. It's the perfect opportunity to put the hammer down and enjoy a final blast to the finish.

ORGANISER'S TARGET SPEEDS		
Category	Award	Average speed
Band1:18-39male	Gold	22.13kph (13.75mph)
	Silver	18.51kph (11.50mph)
	Bronze	15.29kph (9.50mph)
Band2:18-39female/ under-18 male / 40-49 male	Gold	21.02kph(13.06mph)
	Silver	17.58kph (10.93mph)
	Bronze	14.52kph (9.03mph
BandB40-49female/ under-18female/ 50+ male	Gold	19.92kph (12.38mph)
	Silver	16.66kph(10.35mph)
	Bronze	13.76kph (8.55mph)
Band4:50+female	Gold	18.81kph (11.69mph)
	Silver	15.73kph (9.78mph)
	Bronze	13.00kph (8.08mph)

# The challenges

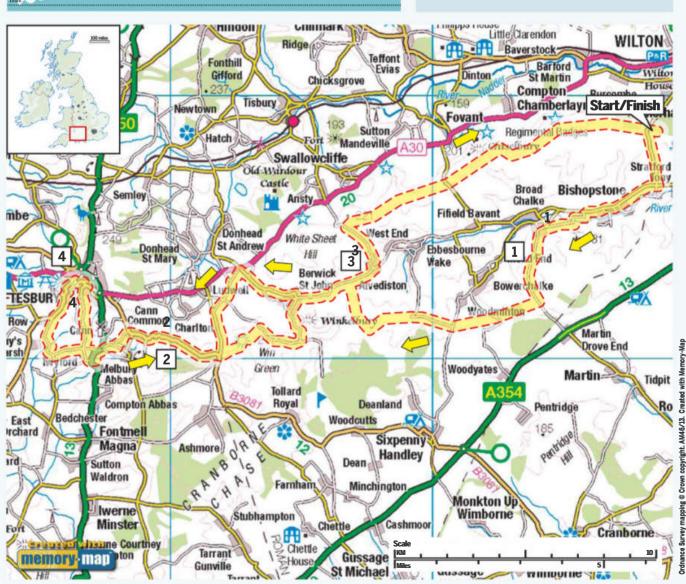
**1** Knowle Hill
Coming six miles from the start, and rising over 100m in less than 2km, this is a nasty shock, as you leave the tranquil Ebble Valley and climb up to the Ox Drove ridge. A south-westerly wind will make things even harder.

2 Zig-Zag Hill
Not the hardest hill
on the route — the famous
hairpins thankfully take
the edge off the gradient
— but it's a dramatic
ascent, frequently used
in road races. Time to sit
down, engage the right
gear, and climb like a pro.

Middle Down
The final climb on the route, and a real killer if you haven't held back a bit of energy. It kicks off with a painful 25 per cent then eases slightly, but it's still a grind up through open fields towards the summit at Old Shaftesbury Drove.

# NAIL IT

**4** Gold Hill
Without doubt, this is the hardest climb on the route. Not because you've already climbed French
Mill Lane to get here. Not because it's getting on for 20 per cent in places. Not because the cobbles will try to shake your arms from the handlebars. And not because they're slippery when wet, meaning wheel-spin is likely. No. It's because Gold Hill is a popular tourist spot and there will be people watching. So you simply have to keep pedalling and do your best to make it look effortless.



Event website: www.cxsportive.com/events/gold-rush-cx/ | Download the GPX file: www.ridewithgps.com/trips/5238407

# **Dundee** Wheelers

# Trevor Ward joins a club proud of its roots, recruits and social scene

TT champion, a Highland Games grass-track racer and a Commonwealth Games veteran in its ranks, Dundee Wheelers is steeped in the traditions of the old-fashioned

ith a national

It even has a weekly committee meeting at a local rugby club, though secretary Graeme Carruthers insists, "It's only 15 minutes of club business followed by 45 minutes of gossip."

cycling club.

But it's obvious as we head out on the club's regular 'steady' Saturday morning ride that the winds of change are in the air, the most obvious one being the recent upsurge in female members.

This is largely thanks to Jim Fowlis, a Wheeler for 10 years, who launched an informal recruitment drive at the city's Ninewells Hospital, where he is the nursing director.

"A few nurses were planning to ride a Cycletta [women-only] event, so I invited them along to our Thursday night ride for training," he explains to me as we slip the surly bonds of Dundee's outskirts and enter the lush, rolling countryside of Perthshire. "Before we knew it, they were inviting their friends along and we had 15 new members."

I catch up with two of these new recruits, Oonagh Webster and Jill Murray, as we descend into the village of Newtyle. If it wasn't obvious from the pace they are setting, their combined battle scars leave no doubts about how seriously they take cycling. Webster sports a six-inch scar from a broken wrist she suffered on the track at Dundee's Caird Park, while Murray's bandaged left knee is a souvenir from an intense session of hill-climbs.

But it is NHS dentist Gillian Elliot who has really impressed the Wheelers' old hands. Earlier that week, she'd set a blistering time of 25-46 in her first ever 10-mile time trial. She'd only joined the club to gain some group-riding experience before entering a sportive.

"I'd never cycled in a bunch before, so it was extremely useful," she says. "At first I was scared of all those wheels and would hang off the back, but the riders beside me taught me how to keep a safe distance and rotate through the group."

Two other female members
— financial consultant Fiona
Davidson and special needs

# Club facts

Based: Dundee, Scotland
Members: 50+
Formed: 1971
Meets: Millennium Hall, Birkhill for
Saturday club run with cafe stop;
Camperdown Park Gates, Dundee
for long Sunday run with cafe stop.
Training rides: Tuesday and
Thursday evenings.

teacher Karen Knight — share a dubious honour: they are married to members of the city's other cycling club, Dundee Thistle.

"Fortunately, it's quite a friendly rivalry," says Davidson. "You get a lot of Wheelers taking part in Thistle's fast, flat Wednesday night runs, while some of their lot join us on our Thursday night hilly rides."

#### **Rural** escape

We are now in beautiful countryside on the edge of the Angus Glens, and it's hard to believe we are so close to Scotland's fourth-largest city. David Ross pulls up alongside me with a smile as wide as

# History

The Wheelers formed in 1971 with the amalgamation of two of Scotland's oldest clubs, Dundee Roads CC and Forfarshire Road Club, commemorated in the blue and yellow colours of their jersey.

The club's annual Reliability Trial, usually in February, features routes of 70, 50, and 30 miles. It also organises the Tour of the Glens Challenge.

Former secretary David McCallum, who raced as a 16-year-old with Dundee Roads CC and is now 77, says the club's emphasis is on non-competitive events now rather than racing.

"It reflects how cycling has become much more social," he says. "In the old days, you'd join as a youngster and serve a racing apprenticeship. Now you don't see that youth development as much; it's more a case of people from other sports in their 30s and 40s switching to cycling."

Reflecting this, sportive events and long-distance rides are a major part of the Wheelers' calendar. The club organises an annual, two-day, 250-mile coast-to-coast ride across Scotland and back as well as a one-day, 150-mile 'Deeside Loop'. Members also regularly take part in all Europe's major sportives, including the Maratona dles Dolomites and Majorca 312. The club also organises an annual spring training camp in Majorca.

The Wheelers introduced its Saturday morning 'steady' run two years ago. "This proved very successful in introducing riders new to club runs and who were perhaps put off by the thought they couldn't keep up or would slow down the faster Sunday run. Our membership has grown as a result," says secretary Graeme Carruthers.

### Achievements

- David McCallum: more than 80 wins in his long career, including: Scottish 10 TT record holder (22-13) for seven years in the Seventies; Perth to Dundee TT record holder (39-33); Scottish vets champion at all age levels from 40 upwards.
- Donald Langlands: rode for Scotland at the 1958 British Empire & Commonwealth Games.
- Victor Polanski: ex-professional

grass-track racer on the Highland Games circuit, 1962–2001. Scottish champion five times.

■ Bob Kilhooley (who passed away in July) was part of the team that held the British 12-hour TT record set in 1955.



# **Dundee Wheelers club run**

# 43 MILES

# Ride highlights

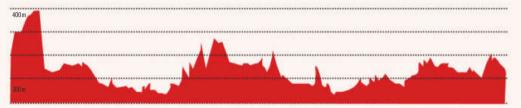
1 Pitnappy descent
It's amazing how quickly you
can be out of one of Scotland's
largest cities and into glorious
countryside; the experience is
even better when it involves a long,
shallow descent such as this one.

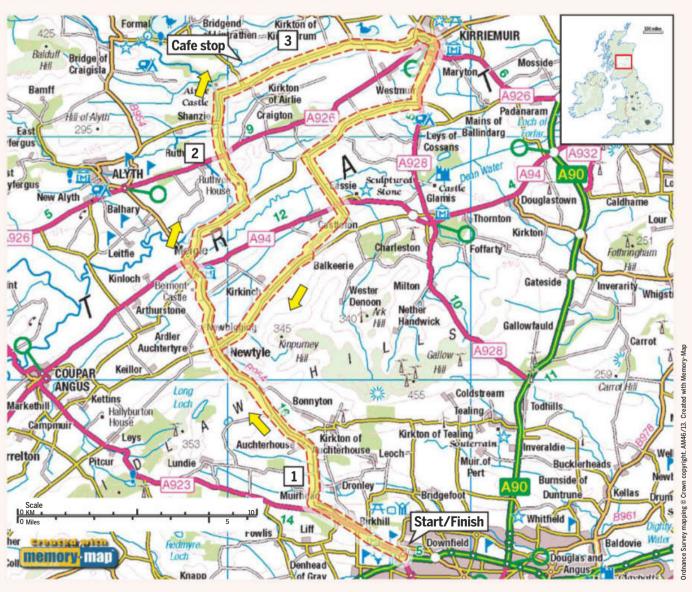
2 Alyth Hill
This five-kilometre climb
from the pleasant town of Alyth
is gradual and rarely taxing, but
affords wonderful views towards
the hills straddling the border
between Perthshire and Angus.

3 Loch of Lintrathen
The route from here is a series
of bridges, streams and scenic
villages. It's a perfect post-prandial
leg-stretcher, but don't relax too
much as there are still a few short
climbs on the way home.

## Favourite cafe

If they have a big group, the Wheelers call ahead to Peel Farm Coffee Shop at Lintrathen to reserve a table in the conservatory. It's easy to see why it's their regular choice. Not only is it in a beautiful setting — the Loch of Lintrathen and the Reekie Linn waterfall are nearby — but it does a spectacular selection of home-made cakes, pancakes and scones, including Rolo and Malteser slices, and ginger and lemon cake. At one member's recommendation. CW ordered a banana and salted caramel scone with rhubarb jam — and was not disappointed.





# A cosy retreat for coffee and cake awaits the club

# Tuck in, before they're all scone

the Tay. "Beautiful, isn't it?" he says.

Previously, he'd been used to riding these roads on his Triumph Tiger 800 or Harley-Davidson, but they are now mothballed in his garage.

"Being on a bicycle is so much more fun and sociable," he says. "Since joining the



club, I've become fitter, faster and happier than I ever was on a motorbike."

As we start the return journey home, I find myself in the company of 80-year-old Donnie Langlands, who competed for Scotland in the 10-mile TT at the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games only for a mechanical to scupper his chances.

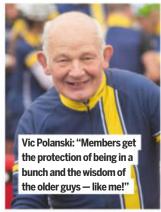
"I don't ride with the club as much as I did because I keep getting dropped," he laughs. "But being a club member is a great way of getting the miles in. There is a great depth of experience and the camaraderie is wonderful."

### Meet the club









Contact: www.dundeewheelers.co.uk | Twitter: @DundeeWheelers | Facebook: Dundee Wheelers CC

# Team support gives Aru the edge



### Italian and his Astana team capitalise on Dumoulin's isolation

Stephen Puddicombe

o those outside the sport, the idea that cycling is a team sport rather than one raced by individuals is often difficult to get to grips with, but rarely has the notion been clearer than it was during the final week of this year's Vuelta GC battle.

On one hand, there was Astana, a team full of exceptional climbing domestiques able to amass at the front of the peloton on every key GC stage and keep their leader Fabio Aru out of any trouble. They were up against Giant-Alpecin, a talented team but nonetheless wholly unprepared to support Tom Dumoulin's extremely unexpected GC bid, and whose domestiques regularly dropped like flies every time the road went uphill.

It was telling, therefore, that Dumoulin's challenge in the final week was underpinned on the one day in which each rider was genuinely pitted mano a mano against the other, without any help from team-mates: the individual time trial. He made the most of his favourite discipline to trounce the field and win the stage, crucially putting 1-53 into Aru to move into the overall lead by just three seconds.

But when, three days later, the Dutchman — unable to follow Aru's wheel as the Italian launched an attack on the Puerto de la Morcuera 48km from the finish — found himself with no teammates to assist him, this was the moment Aru yanked overall victory away from him. Aru was able to call upon Andrey Zeits and Luis Leon Sanchez to drop

### "Dumoulin found himself with no team-mates and Aru yanked victory away"

back from the break up ahead and join Mikel Landa in pacing him on the subsequent descent. Dumoulin — who summitted with Aru still in sight — was obliged to do all the work himself.

Usually Dumoulin's big, strong frame gives him the advantage on the downhill and the flat, but in a three-versus-one situation between him and the Astana domestiques, the odds were stacked against him. The gap grew and grew until the Vuelta title was well and truly out of sight.

Would the result have been different if the team scenarios had been reversed, so that Dumoulin been able to instruct the Astana climbers to protect him and set a steady pace in the mountains (a la Wiggins and Sky in 2012), while Aru was instead left regularly isolated by his Giant-Alpecin riders? We can never know for sure, but it's hard to believe that that fatal moment on stage 20 would have produced the same winner.

### Age is just a number

As has been the case for much of this Vuelta, it was a tale of two generations in week three.

The GC battle came down to a two-man tussle between a 24-year-old (Dumoulin) and a 25-year-old (Aru), both seeking to win a maiden Grand Tour. Dumoulin may have faded to sixth, but the emergence of 26-year-old Rafal Majka (Tinkoff-Saxo) to finish third ensured a youthful-looking podium.

Sandwiched between, and at the other end of the career spectrum, was Joaquim Rodríguez — a rider over 10 years their senior — whose own chance of winning a first Grand Tour is rapidly running out.

The final few stage winners were similarly disparate: 22-year-old Alexis Gougeard (Ag2r La Mondiale) announced his talent as a

powerful rouleur on stage 19, by attacking his breakaway companions and maintaining his lead to Avila to win the stage.

The next day, 35-year-old Ruben Plaza (Lampre-Merida) won, having spent hours alone out in front, continuing his late-career resurgence having won a stage at the Tour too. An uncommonly aggressive Haimar Zubeldia (Trek) nearly scored another win for the veterans on stage 18, but was outsprinted by Sky's Nicolas Roche — the only stage winner this week near the middle of his career.

Special mention also must go to Adam Hansen (Lotto-Soudal), who, despite turning 34 this year, is riding with the enthusiasm of someone much younger, and completed his 13th successive Grand Tour.



**26.8** 

Average age of the top six overall

2

Points Alejandro Valverde won green jersey by

19

Days Omar Fraile spent leading the mountains classification

**8** 

Number of times the red jersey changed hands

10

Years separating Ruben Plaza's Vuelta stage wins



#### Result

Stage 17: Burgos ITT, 38.7km Winner: Tom Dumoulin (Giant-Alpecin) Dumoulin trounced the field to reclaim red; Aru finished the day three seconds behind, while Rodríguez drifted to third overall.

Stage 18: Roa de Duero > Riaza, 204km Winner: Nicolas Roche (Sky) Roche beat Haimar Zubeldia in a two-man sprint for the stage, and although Aru repeatedly attacked he couldn't dislodge Dumoulin.

Stage 19: Medina del Campo > Avila, 185.8km
Winner: Alexis Gougeard (Ag2r La Mondiale)
This time Dumoulin attacked Aru on the uphill finish to gain three seconds on the line, while 22-year-old Gougeard won with a solo attack.

Stage 20: San Lorenzo de El Escorial > Cercedilla, 175.8km Winner: Ruben Plaza (Lampre-Merida) Dumoulin's dream ended as he was dropped on the penultimate climb, and Aru and Astana capitalised. Plaza won the stage with a threehour solo break.

Stage 21: Alcalá de Henares > Madrid, 98.8km Winner: John Degenkolb (Giant-Alpecin)
The German took his 10th career Vuelta stage win on the circuit finale to the race, beating Danny Van Poppel (Trek) and Jempy Drucker (BMC) in a reduced sprint.

### Final overall classification 1. Fabio Aru (Ita) Astana in 85-36-13

85-36-13
2. Joaquim Rodríguez (Esp)
Katusha at 0-57
3. Rafal Majka (Pol)
Tinkoff-Saxo at 1-09
4. Nairo Quintana (Col)
Movistar at 1-42
5. Esteban Chaves (Col)
Orica-GreenEdge at 3-10
6. Tom Dumoulin (Ned)
Giant-Alpecin at 3-46
7. Alejandro Valverde (Esp)
Movistar at 6-47
8. Mikel Nieve (Esp) Sky
at 7-06
9. Daniel Moreno (Esp)
Katusha at 7-12
10. Louis Meintjes (RSA)
MTN-Qhubeka at 10-26

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### Two from two for Sumner

en Sumner (Beeline-Gener8) won the opening round of the Wessex League in Oxford on Sunday, his second win of the new season after also taking the opening race of the Eastern League the previous weekend. He edged to victory in a close sprint finish from Dan Tulett (Specialized Racing), while Sam Allen (Pedal On) was third.

In this week's Eastern League race at Chelmsford, 2014 league winner Matt Holmes (Arctic Tacx) took the win by 35 seconds from junior rider Dougal Toms (Iceni Velo).

In the BWA West Midlands League, Harry Yates (Hargroves Cycles) made it two wins from two races when he held off George Moore (Bicicielo) on the line at Shrewsbury.

Paul Oldham (Hope Factory Racing) also took a second win in the Yorkshire Points Series at Northallerton, beating team-mate Jack Clarkson who had won the previous day's Lazer North West League race in Preston.



In time trialling, Sam Henning won the GHS Championship 10-mile final staged in Hertfordshire on Saturday. The 16-year-old who rides for Catford CC clocked 20.21 to win by 17 seconds from Marcus Burnett (Corley Cycles) with Alex van Katwyk (Guernsey Velo) third. The winning girl was Pfeiffer Georgi

(Giant CC-Halo Films) with 22.49, more than a minute quicker than second-placed Hetty Niblett (Mid-Shropshire Wheelers).

British Best All-Rounder contender Adam Topham (High Wycombe CC) won the Yorkshire RC 50 near Thirsk on Sunday. His time of 1:38.10 was just 17 seconds better than Steve Irwin (North Lancs RC).

In hill-climbing, Adam Kenway (SportGrub KUOTA) won both stages of the East Lancashire RC events on Sunday. He won the first stage at Chapel-en-le-Frith by 27 seconds from Lee Baldwin (Champion System), and also won the second stage on Peaslows Hill by eight seconds to take the overall win by 36 seconds.

And in Cumbria, John Findley (High On Bikes) was a convincing winner of the Border City Wheelers event. He crested the 5.3-mile Hartside climb in 17:46.6 to defend his 2014 victory and win by 13 seconds from Alistair Robinson (Leslie Bike Shop).

### Time trials

### RTTC National 20-mile Circuit Championships (Cranfield, Bedfordshire):

#### 1. Matt Clinton (Mike Vaughan Cycles).... 41.30 2. J. Williams (Revolutions Racing). 3. B. Harwood (Terry Wright Cycles RC). 42 17 4. C. Fennell (Banks/Catford CC Equipe). 42.50 5. D. Robson (Somerset Road Club/ The Bicycle Chain) 43 20 43.27 6. W. Goulbourne (Team Corley Cycles) ..... 7. K. Tve (VeloRefined Aerosmiths). 43 39 8. D. Coleman (CC Luton). 43.48 9. N. English (Banjo Cycles.com). 44.20 10. A. Meilak (VeloRefined Aerosmiths) ... Women: 1. Sarah Storey (Pearl Izumi Sports Tours International BOBC) 46.47 2. C. Rose (Pearl Izumi Sports Tours

3. Helen McKay (Les Filles RT)	48.43
Juniors:	
1. Matt Langworthy (Mid Devon CC)	44.14
2. J. Garratt (Welland Valley CC)	44.57
3. G. Clarke (High Wycombe CC)	45.01
Junior girl: Louise Scupham	
(Scarborough Paragon CC)	53.49

International BOBC)

Yorkshire Road Club 50

(High Wycombe CC) ..

(Thirsk, North Yorksh	ire):
1. Adam Topham	
(High Wycombe CC)	1:38.10

2. S. Irwin (North Lancs RC)	1:38.27
3. A. Jackson (Team Swift)	1:41.19
4. J. Wainman (Team Swift)	1:43.37
5. R. Townsend (Team Swift)	1:45.40
6. M. Wolstenholme (Team Swift)	1:47.21
7. I. Miller (Brigg and Dist CC)	1:47.30
8. J. Brearley (City RC Hull)	1:48.13
9. D. Gee (Teesdale CRC)	1:48.19
10. M. Nulty (Glossop Kinder Velo)	1:48.39
Women: Vicky Jowett (Team Swift)	2:08.03

### Mid-Devon CC 25 (Buckfastleigh, Devon):

1. Conrad Moss (Mid	-Devon CO	;)	.49.30
2. G. Chambers (RNRM	ICA)		50.41
3. M. Slater (Exe Velo).			51.12
4. G. Fouracres (St Aus	stell Wh)		52.27
5. A. Perkins (Mid-Dev	on CC)		52.30
6. G. Macdougall (Tavi	stock Wh)		53.28
7. S. Frost (Yeovil CC)			53.52
8. L. Obornik (CS Dyna	mo)		53.59
9. S. Hockings-Thomps	son (CS Dyr	namo)	54.03
10. M. Sanders (Mid-D	evon CC)		54.44
Women: Catherine Hi	lton (N1 Tria	athlon)	58.39

### Saturday, September 12 GHS 10-mile Championships Final (Ware, Herts):

48.17

20,0.	
1. Samuel Henning	
(Dr Challoners Grammar School)	20.21
2. M. Burnett (Corley Cycles)	. 20.38
3. A. van Katwyk (Guernsey Velo Club)	.20.40
4. J. Freeman (Alton CC/ Owens Cycles)	.20.54
5. K. Hotson (Flex-Tech Ettridge Cycles RT)	. 21.03
6. T. Modell (Corley Cycles Drops RT)	. 21.08
7. B. Vaudin (Guernsey Velo Club)	.21.28
8. C. Davies (Team RL360 Isle of Man)	. 21.37

9. W. Draper (Team RL360 Isle of Man)	21.40
10. B. Jones (Lincsquad)	21.41
Girls:	
1. Pfeiffer Georgi (Giant CC Halo Films)	22.49
Preiffer Georgi (Giant CC Halo Films)     H. Niblett (Mid Shropshire Wh)	

### Road racing

### **BC West Thames Series round 23** (Hillingdon circuit, Middlesex):

E, 1, 2, 3: 1. Lewis Atkins (Pedal Heaven RT); 2. R. Moore (Pedal Heaven RT); 3. M. Cripps (Army CU); 4. M. Clarke (London Dynamo); 5. G. Crow (Handsling RT); 6. B. Ball (Catford CC); 7. L. Wuziak (Team Corley Cycles); 8. F. Spalchieru (SD Racing); 9. J. Perkins (Beeston RC): 10. R. Keeping (Full Gas Racing). Women: Lorna Bowler (Hillingdon Slipstreamers)

### **Bournemouth Cycleworks Autumn Road Race** (Lulworth Castle circuit, Dorset):

3, 4:1. Kim Little (Merida Factory Racing) 45 miles in 1:51.00; 2. H. Chamberlain (Southampton University RC); 3. C. Harris (Bristol RC); 4. R. Slocombe (Offcamber); 5. G. Greening (Mud Sweat and Gears); 6. O. Hayward (University of Birmingham CC); 7. V. Harding (unattached); 8. A. Hart (Sarum Velo); 9. N. O'Hara (3C Cyclexperience); 10. T. Stocker (Bournemouth Jubilee Wh)

### Beeline Bicycles Road Race (Horton-cum-Studley, Oxfordshire):

2.3:1. Danny Axford (Arctic Tacx RT) 90 kilometres in 2:15.00; 2. 0. Hutchings (Bikeshed UEX) +0.06; 3. D. Billings (VC St Raphael) +0.07; 4. C. Morrison (Pearson Cycles) +0.12; 5. E. Giles (RP Racing Team) +0.15; 6. J. Stanton-Warren (Halesowen A & CC); 7. M. Burke (Welland Valley CC); 8. K. Jasper (Bikeshed UEX); 9. A. Moore (Team Moore Fitness); 10. S. Thomas (Dream Cycling RT) all same time.



### Sunday, September 13 Border City Wh (Hartside, Cumbria, 5,3 miles):

1. John Findley (High On Bikes)	17:46.6
2. A. Robinson (Leslie Bike Shop)	17:59.9
3. M. Jones (GS Metro)	18:07.6
4. A. Foster (Border City Wh)	18:12.4
5. J. Bayley (Gosforth RC)	18:16.1
6. C. Donaldson (GS Metro)	18:23.3
7. M. Moorhouse (Preston CC)	18:27.3
8. M. Openshaw (Cestria CC)	18:57.1
9. C. Atkinson (EMC)	
10. N. Paterson (VC Cumbria)	19:06.4
Veterans: Michael Openshaw	
Women: Fiona Blackett	
(Bishop Auckland CC)	21:33.6
Juniors: Archie Irving (Beacon Wh)	21:43 6

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SURLY Custom build by Bicycle Doctor Manchester 50 cm frame, magenta, Tiagra group set, schwalbe tyres. It has had very little use as a little on the big side for me (I am 5'7"). Lovely looking bike and a lot of fun to ride. Needs loving home. £900. Nelson. Tel: 07450 976541. Email: lorraine. broadhurst@gmail.com



SCOTT SOLACE 30 2015 These bikes are in excellent condition. They are only a couple of months old and have seen very little use. We have a mixture of sizes available. Shimano 105 (11 speed) full compact C/set with 11-32 Cassette, HMF carbon frame, full original Scott 2015 spec. Sizes 52cm, 54cm, 56cm. £1100.00. Kent, UK. Tel: 07920 401650. Email: gregoryscottcraig@gmail.com



JOHNNY BERRY Nice collectors bike Johnny Berry" 24 inch Track bike, frame No 561758, Nervex Lugs, 700c wheels hand built by Pete Mathews, Pianni Rims, Sealed Hubs, Stronglight 52 Chain Set, Campag Pedals, Clips and Straps, GB Stem, Cinneli Bars. Selle Rolls San Marco Saddle, Mud Guards, Cat eye Computer. resprayed White 40 years ago. £650. Merseyside. Tel: 0151 487 3700. Email: alan.clark21@icloud.com



SCOTT CR1 COMP 2009. 18 speed 56cm. Carbon frame and forks. Shimano Tiagra/105 components. 50/34 chainrings. 11-25 cassette. Shimano R500 wheels. Michelin Pro 4 tyres. New casstte, chain, and freewheel fitted. Excellent condition. £500. Harpenden Herts. Tel: 07949 916750. Email: richard.hoar@ 17/9 skv.com



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KUOTA KURARO, small frame (check Kuota site for dimensions), Vision TC50 wheels 11 speed Ultegra 6800 groupset, really stunning bike. Pedals and Mio bracket not included. £1400. Huddersfield. Tel: 07787 701677. Email: janrod@clara.co.uk



RIVETTE R6, 56cm, Unusual and almost unique bike. Black, Alloy frame, Carbon Forks, USE Carbon Bars, Seat-post and Bottle Cages, Fizik Saddle, Mavic SSC Wheels, Ultegra 10 & Compact Chainset, Very good condition. £850 ono. Kingston upon Thames. Tel: 07710 512074. Email: anderson@globalnet.co.uk



QUINTANA ROO Triathlon bike for sale matt grey with Ultegra leavers and rear de-railer and FSA crank. I havnt used this bike in about 5 years and have taken some parts off to be used as spares on others. It is missing the Screws for the horizontal drop outs and the leaver that adjusts the brakes. Theses parts can be easily obtained or it will make a great bike to use as spares It has a light weight aluminium frame with carbon fibber rear stays. £300. Swindon/ Northampton. Tel: 07828 147795. Email: lowtheralistair@yahoo.co.uk



CERVELO RS , 56cm, Full carbon frame/forks, Campag Chorus Compact 11speed, KsyriumSL wheels, Vittoria tyres, ProVibe stem/ seatpin, Fizik Arione saddle, Summer leisure ridden only, Immaculate in black/white, £1875. Mid Kent. Tel: 01580 753426. Email: david@dchurchill. plus.com 24/9



KINESIS Kenesis RacelightTK, 57cm, Alloy with carbon forks, Campag Centaur compact 10speed, Campag Neutron wheels, Conti tyres, ITM bars/stem, Fizik Arione saddle. Great machine for leisure/training and winter riding. £895. Mid Kent. Tel: 01580 753426



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PINARELLO DOGMA F8 Size 50cm Colour is Black on Black Most Bars/Stem 120cm Dura-Ace Di2 Groupset 36/52-12/27 Look Keo Blade pedals Fulcrum Zero Carbon Clinchers Vittoria CX 25mm Tyres Selle Italia Carbonio Flight Saddle Bought New this year but hardly ridden, due to ill health. £6500 ONO. Derbyshire. Tel: 01246 823865. Email: openevents@hotmail.com 24/9



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# Hutch

The Doc takes comfort in admitting responsibility for his own mishaps, regardless of whose fault it is...

doctorhutch\_cycling@timeinc.com

t's nice to know that if something bad happens to you, it was your fault. Whatever it was. Especially if you think it isn't. Knocked off by a car? Your fault. Punched by a psychopath? Your fault. Hit by a meteorite? Well, were you wearing a helmet? There you are then. Your fault.

It's a tendency that has an aggressive expression on the opinion pages of certain varieties of newspaper. It will be a great comfort to my family to know that if I get killed by a left-turning lorry in London someday, it will have re-established the cosmic balance after a Daily Mail columnist saw a man in an anorak jump a red light in Stoke in 1983.

What is a bit of a surprise is the number of cyclists who take a broadly similar view. On any occasion where a helmet-cam video goes viral, for example, it is never long before a another rider pops up to say something like: "I think people who carry a camera when on a ride are probably just out looking for trouble."

It's a sentiment that is not diminished when the one thing the footage makes clear is that even if they were looking for trouble, on this occasion, they never had a clue what hit them. The logic must be that anyone can get lucky.

The other complaint is that you are never told how a confrontation started. "No one would knock over an innocent rider deliberately — there must have been a good reason that they were that angry." Hence any video that has been edited so that it doesn't include everything that happened since the Mesopotamians invented the wheel is suspicious. Ditto any written account from the rider that doesn't commence with the proud boast that they beat a puppy to death with a bike pump. You can't trust the word of anyone who doesn't kill puppies for laughs.

On the off-chance we get any greater context to the incident, what's extraordinary is the lack of proportion. "Well, if you look at the whole thing, you've got to say he deserved that." This judgement will be served irrespective of the relative seriousness of any action



In London last week I watched a man attempt to return a Boris Bike to a rack.

Bear in mind that all the other bikes in the rack were docked front wheel-first. And that every one of the thousands of bikes docked in London was attached front wheel-first. And that when he rented his, it must have been docked... front wheel-first.

So quite why he was so determined that this particular example would only dock back wheel-first is something of a mystery. Or why his faith in this belief was entirely unshaken by five full minutes of sustained failure.

Eventually a passer-by helped him. I was rather sorry. I'd refrained from doing so myself in the hope he was going to try to ride off on it again. I wanted to see which way he was going to face.



and its response. Tell someone to stop texting and try looking out of the big window on the other side of the steering wheel, and only an idiot would not see attempted murder was the texter's only logical option.

The helmet thing is much the same. The papers might report (and, tragically, sometimes do): "The cyclist, who was not wearing a helmet, suffered fatal crushing injuries to the chest."

You hold your breath for a correction to "...not wearing a magic helmet of invincibility..." but, of course, it never comes. Even in

### "Even in death, you get judged on whether you wore a helmet"

death, you get judged on whether you wore a helmet, regardless of whether it would have saved you.

There is a reason for all this. It's about control. We all desperately want to be in control of what happens to us. Not unreasonably, we have a fear of the capricious. "I wouldn't have been hurt, or killed, in an incident like that one. because I wouldn't have done what they did. I wouldn't have used that cycle lane. I wouldn't have told the guy in the Focus to look where he was going, he was obviously a psycho, just look at the way his ears have gone pink. And, of course, I'd have worn a helmet. A magic helmet."

The idea that bad things happen to good bike riders at random and without warning is too dreadful to contemplate.

That's why it's always nice to know that it's all your fault.



# GREAT INVENTIONS OF CYCLING

# **Beetroot** juice

There have been several good studies that have shown a benefit to endurance athletes from drinking beetroot juice. I suppose it was inevitable that if there was free speed going, it would take the form of something the taste of which is only just this side of liquidized soil.

Beetroot juice contains nitrates, which the body can convert into nitric oxide. It does this via an odd route. Nitrates are absorbed into the bloodstream before being released in saliva, converted into nitrites by bacteria in your mouth, and then into nitric oxide. So — and this is important — it won't work if you brush your teeth after drinking it.

One of the effects is as a vasodilator, so it increases the diameter of your blood vessels. Bigger blood vessels can, supposedly, deliver blood and hence oxygen to the working muscles more quickly.

You need to drink 300-500ml of beetroot juice about three hours before exercise. Or you can "nitrate load" by drinking the same dose each day for two to three days prior to a target event. For those who unaccountably don't fancy a pint of it, more concentrated drinks and nitrate energy-gels are available.

There is a disturbing side effect — for a lot of people, beetroot juice stains the urine a colour between rose wine and fresh blood

On the up side, well, it's a vasodilator, so, well, um.... Put it this way, at a vegetable stall in rural Ireland a few years ago, a giggling woman tried to make me buy beetroot on the basis it was, "nature's Viagra". She kind of had a point.

The beetroot, perfect for vasodilation and... rosy-coloured wee







### Passo di Mortirolo

Chris Sidwells reveals why this climb tests the best, and for the rest is a struggle just to finish

here's a sign at the foot of Mortirolo that warns people of the dangers of tackling the road and suggests that motorists avoid it altogether. In contrast, the mountain scenery is simply stunning, with beautiful views over the Bernina Alps drawing the tourists in the summer months. But for those on two wheels. the Mortirolo is too tough to give the surroundings a second glance; it's there only to be climbed - if you dare.

The pass connects Valtellina with Val Camonica, and on maps is called the Passo di Foppa. Just to make things more confusing, a rough track to the northeast is called the Passo di Mortirolo. But the signposts leave you in no doubt as to the fact that this is the Mortirolo, and as the signposts leave you in no doubt as to

the Giro d'Italia refers to it as such, the name has stuck. There are three ways up this climb, but Giro organiser RCS Sport has always sent its race up the toughest ascent, from Mazzo di Valtellina, east of its 1.852m summit. The race first used the 12.5km climb in 1990. Since then, it has been up it a further 11 times as the Mortirolo has cemented its place as one of the Giro's final battlegrounds.

Despite the warnings of a hazardous road ahead, the Mortirolo starts relatively easily, with stretches of seven and eight per cent. The road here is narrow, though well surfaced. Once the muggy streets of Mazzo are left behind, birdsong is all around and a light mountain breeze will tousle the treetops.

### The nightmare begins

A stretch of 11.6 per cent preludes the frightening mid-section. From kilometre three at San Matteo to kilometre nine, the average gradient is almost 13 per cent, with four sections of back-breaking 18 per cent, giving an incredible height

gain of 800m in six kilometres. This is the crux of the Mortirolo.

The road writhes and twists upwards, searching for easier lines up the steep banks. In high summer it's oppressive, as dense tree cover forms a dark tunnel and removes any sense of location. Only the best can think about racing up this slope; for the rest, it's just torment.

This is where Marco Pantani made his name with a stand-out stage victory in the 1994 Giro. After his death in 2004, Pantani was honoured here by RCS with the Cima Pantani prize for the first rider to pass the summit. Then the Association of Italian Professional Racers, and Pantani's long-time sponsor Bianchi, commissioned a monument, which now sits one kilometre before the trees thin and the gradient eases, some four kilometres from the top.

With sections of seven to nine per cent, the final kilometres still bite a pair of tired legs, but at least there's time to look around at the view that opens up ahead of you.

## Mallorca, Always ON





Porn.



